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THE DISCOVERER OF THE FORGOTTEN MAN

BY A. G. KELLER

"WHEN I was a boy," says a gentleman now elderly, "I can remember seeing the announcement displayed over the portals of a mid-Western auditorium:

"PROFESSOR SUMNER ON THE FORGOTTEN MAN"

Of this popular and widely delivered lecture the original manuscript was found, yellow with age, in a drawer of Sumner's desk after his death. Published as the title-essay of "The Forgotten Man and Other Essays", its substance appears likewise in "What Social Classes Owe to Each Other" (1883), a small classic fit, when some of our sentimental folly shall have been fried out of us by adversity, to be the handbook of a more sane and sober social economy.

William Graham Sumner was born in 1840 and died in 1910. "I have lived," he remarked, shortly before his death, "through the best period of this country's history. The next generations are going to see war and social calamities. I am glad I don't have to live on into them."

After his graduation from Yale in 1863, Sumner studied theology for three years at Geneva, Göttingen, and Oxford, and

became, succeeding an interlude of teaching Greek and other freshman subjects at Yale, pastor of the Episcopal church in Morristown, N. J. Recalled thence to Yale and appointed, at thirty-two, professor of political and social science, he served mightily till his retirement in 1909.

For about twenty years his labors were confined to political economy. His first book, not counting a translation and enlargement of Bähr's "The Books of the Kings", was a history of the American currency. There followed biographies of Hamilton, Jackson, and Robert Morris, and a history of American banking; and he was much before the public in articles, controversial encounters, and public lectures. His bibliography, by no means complete, contains over two hundred and fifty items, mostly of an economic and political character as reflecting the subjects he was brought to Yale to develop.

Sumner's interest, however, was never confined to matters of finance and politics, but steadily urged him into the wider range of a general science of society. In particular, the influence of Herbert Spencer, early in the 70's, stimulated an impulse already in the man toward scope and

synthesis. By 1892 he had begun to let go his economics, and the end of the century found all his courses "societological". He avoided the term "sociology" because of its "softheadedness". During the 90's, his energies were turned toward the collection of a mass of materials bearing upon the evolution of institutions, and in 1907 appeared "Folkways"—of which he remarked that he could not be sure whether it was a gold mine or a big hole in the ground; it would be for others to decide which.

"Folkways", originally planned as a chapter or section in "The Science of Society", which Sumner began to put together in 1899, gradually and somewhat to the author's surprise and consternation, evolved in his own mind into the underlying basis of that science; the whole treatise, he told me, must be recast and rewritten in the light of "Folkways"—a task which, he was convinced, he could not live to accomplish. The project was finally completed, in 1927, by the present writer. A popular abridgment of the four volumes of "The Science of Society," called "Man's Rough Road", has been sponsored by the Sumner Club, an organization of Yale graduates and others who are interested in the dissemination of a way of viewing society and its evolution once known by undergraduate Yale as Sumnerology.

These paragraphs may briefly introduce Sumner to a later generation that may profit by knowing him as a writer and as a man. In view of the fact that "Folkways" steadily rose from a sale of a few hundreds annually to its peak, 1275, at almost its quarter century, there is perhaps no need to present its author to students of society. But there are many who, knowing that work only, do not realize that Sumner had a preceding and quite contrasting

phase. They do not know, for example, the Sumner of "The Forgotten Man". Apparently even Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt does not.

At any rate, recent letters to newspapers have chidden Mr. Roosevelt for not revealing where he got his idea of the Forgotten Man, as well as for not getting it right. There has been many a reference in recent years, in editorials and elsewhere, to "Sumner's Forgotten Man"; nevertheless, his conception of that character ought to be sharpened up again, especially in our time of squalls when ignoring this humble but sound mainstay of the ship of state is fraught with peril.

I am going to present the Forgotten Man through a few brief quotations from "Social Classes", leaving him then to those who may become interested enough to make his thorough acquaintance at the source. The Forgotten Man is not to be confused with the "poor" man, or the whiner, who is never forgotten because he is so constantly dinned into the ear; you might as well speak of forgetting a blue-bottle buzzing about your head. Nor are you called upon all the time to "do something" for the Forgotten Man; all he needs, like the fit organism in nature, is to be let alone. His trouble is that he is not forgotten all the time instead of merely during the period succeeding the picking of his pocket in the interest of some noble enterprise or experiment, while he is patiently trying to fill it again. It is his interests that are ignored; that is how he is "forgotten". Sumner wrote in 1883:

The type and formula of most schemes of philanthropy or humanitarianism is this: A and B put their heads together to decide what C shall be made to do for D. The radical vice of all these schemes is that C is not allowed a voice in the matter, and his position, character, and interests, as well as the ultimate effects on society

through C's interests, are entirely overlooked. I call C the Forgotten Man. . . . The Forgotten Man works and votes—generally he prays—but his chief business in life is to pay. His name never gets into the newspapers except when he marries or dies. He is an obscure man. He may grumble sometimes to his wife, but he does not frequent the grocery, and does not talk politics in a tavern. So he is forgotten. . . . As soon as he is drawn from his obscurity we see that he is just what each one of us ought to be. . . . If any student of social science comes to appreciate the case of the Forgotten Man, he will become an unflinching advocate of strict scientific thinking in sociology, and a hardhearted skeptic as regards any scheme of social amelioration. He will always want to know, Who and where is the Forgotten Man in this case, who will have to pay for it all?

Anyone who has a taste, natural or acquired, for concentrated common sense may satisfy it economically as to time and cost by acquiring that little pocket-sized 170-page pellet of wisdom, "What Social Classes Owe to Each Other". Said a colleague of Sumner's, a few years ago: "I've been reading Sumner's 'Social Classes' again. I used to think it pretty hard doctrine. It is hard, but, darn it! it's true!" I very much fear that some of those who refer to the Forgotten Man take him to be the darling of the prison-reformers, the poor but noble thug or the "victim of society". He is nothing such. He is not even a pauper or a member of the proletariat, that contingent who, by etymology, perform no other service for society beyond the dubious one of reproducing themselves like rabbits. Said Sumner:

It belongs to his character to save something. Hence he is a capitalist, though never a great one. He is a "poor" man in the popular sense of that word, but not in a correct sense. In fact, one of the most constant and trustworthy signs that the Forgotten Man is in danger of a new as-

sault is that "the poor man" is brought into the discussion. Since the Forgotten Man has some capital, any one who cares for his interest will try to make capital secure by securing the inviolability of contracts, the stability of currency, and the firmness of credit. Any one, therefore, who cares for the Forgotten Man will be sure to be considered a friend of the capitalist and an enemy of the poor man.

It can be seen from the foregoing quotations that Sumner was positive. You are never left in doubt as to exactly what he means. He has been accused of intellectual arrogance and dogmatism. Few, whether or not they have concurred in such judgments, have realized the amount of study that lay behind the positions he took. He was of an incredible industry, one which wore out a strong body untimely; for he was a rugged man, of high vitality, in his prime spitting sparks like a live wire. He worked every day—"Sundays, holidays, Fourth of July, Washington's Birthday, all of 'em"—and, as his week was not one of five days, so were his hours not confined to eight a day, but ran into figures that he strove to conceal from his family.

I shall presently try to impart an idea of his industry by recounting some of its results; but first should come the fact that he was a man who was not permitted, either by his own sense of duty or by the absence of demands upon him, to stick to his study. For years he was a class-officer; he was on most of the important college committees of his day, commonly as chairman; he taught heavy schedules and big classes; until he was well past sixty he graded his own hundreds of weekly tests; for twenty years he was on the Connecticut State Board of Education and, according to its secretary, its most active member. He made many public addresses, gave waspish witness before tariff-commissions, made stump speeches. I knew him as an

Within 50 yrs in the U.S. the narrow home view, from purely
influenced religion & the effect of it on our mind. The dogmatic
side of religion has been laid aside by all the protestant &
non-protestant churches. They have a right to preach "theology". They & their
congregations care for theology no longer. They look upon
it merely as the business of the clergy (the pulpit). The pulpit,
as an institution, no longer speaks with authority. It tries to
persuade & to this it has to resort at popularity. It wants to
attract attention like newspapers, books, the theatre, the lecture
platform, & it has done resort to sensational methods. It
cannot command authority, it must try to recruit many staff.
The current fashion is social endeavor, especially just of the form
of charity. This is the line along which the church & down
institutions are with each other for the approval of the public. A
church therefore, turns into a Congress of institutions for various
forms of social amelioration & the pulpit expounds combat
in discussions of public topics, especially social topics, from
an ethical standpoint. That is, by the application of the ethical
or quasi-ethical notions which are at present current in our
society. That is, that but a recasting of the ecclesiastical
notions which we have inherited, according to the notions, how
dards, faiths etc. etc. are in the modern time. Religion,
properly speaking, simply falls away from the theological
view.

It is not a matter of mere action but
of sentiment, & this is more and
more the mode of social amelioration.
The church, however, is not a
body of spiritual energy, & as such
it is not a body of social endeavor
which affects the human
by former process.

Mores & 17. U.S. recent

A Specimen of Sumner's MS., Much Reduced in Scale.

elderly man who had been away on enforced leave for two years, after fainting during a lecture and being carried home in collapse; "no longer better than half a man", generally more or less ailing. But, even so, his industry was no less than appalling.

When Sumner died, he left me fifty-two large drawers and boxes packed with notes upon cards cut to a standard size ($8\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$) peculiar to himself. Twenty of the receptacles contained materials upon economic subjects; the rest covered anthropology, ethnography, sociology, and the other social sciences. A rough estimate, low rather than high, arrives at 3000 sheets to the drawer or box. The notes were, in the main, excerpts from reading, a good many of them, but by no means all, type-written; there were also green sheets covered with his own comments, red ones with references to books and articles to be read as soon as possible—the red slips

thereafter to be filed as bibliography; and blue and yellow ones for one purpose or another. The excerpts are, of course, the body of the collection. Each was scrupulously headed with the full details of reference, set up in rubber type bought for the purpose; for Sumner harbored an abiding fear lest, in the excitement of the chase, he should omit some particular that must later be supplied at an intolerable waste of time. I recall his disgust with himself when he ran into a note that lacked the volume or page reference. There were very few indeed, as I found after working through the whole collection.

Sumner's materials were in many languages: German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Danish-Norwegian, Swedish, Russian, and Polish. Notes in the last two languages were usually translations, in his own handwriting. He had a ready and exact reading knowledge of all these languages, in addition to his earlier

acquired proficiency in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. Evidence exists to show that all of them except the ancient tongues, French, and German were acquired after the age of forty-five. It is said that his encounter with Russian contributed the last strain in leading to his breakdown in his early fifties. His Russian and Polish dictionaries are wrecks. He wanted Russian chiefly to satisfy himself as to the real nature of the *mir*, the village community; he told me the results had not been worth the trouble. The materials which he assembled were arranged and re-arranged. They were marshalled under headings indicated on the projections of pasteboard cards which he cut down with scissors to his needs, always solicitous that one projection should not stand in front of another. As the outcroppings had to be as narrow as possible, he devised a number of private abbreviations, some of them quaint, which should express much in little. A few are reproduced in the next column.

Not a few of these signs got into his writing, strung along with the words, so that the not too intelligent copyist of his unfinished manuscripts emerged, after much bewilderment, with some startling passages.

Sumner was extravagant when it came to the materials he used in his work. Books that arrived in paper covers he had expensively bound. "That's poor stuff", he said of some note-paper upon which one of us had been trying to economize. "It'll rumple all up. It won't stand up straight. It doesn't pay to use anything cheap like that." For his writing he bought unlined heavy paper of the finest grade, about fourteen inches by eight and one-half, much wider therefore than it was long, with a vertical blue line about four inches from the right-hand margin. The space to the

	marriage
	family
	father-family
	mother-family
	organization
	sex
	mores
	(ego) W. G. Sumner
	property
	religion
	state
	soul
	sacrifice
	superstition
	taboo
	luck
	cure

Abbreviations Used by Sumner

right was for his insertions and footnotes, provided the latter were not merely references, in which case they went right into the text. His handwriting is absolutely distinctive and, once one is used to it, with its words and abbreviations all run together, it is readily legible; it always tended to run up-hill as he crossed the sheet. Though he wrote very rapidly, his

pen, he told me, could not keep up with his thought. He did not number his pages but pinned them together with metal clips running through perforations which he made for himself with a powerful punch; so that any failure of his binding apparatus resulted in trouble.

He was, with all his system, singularly unpractical in a number of respects. When he made the index to "Folkways", he used several heavy ledgers, guessing at the space needed for his entries and laboriously paging back and forth. Then he tore off the leather covers, tied the viscera together, and sent them off with some misgivings as to their safety—he had carried the manuscript of "Folkways" to the publishers in a suitcase. The publishers politely intimated that what they wanted was an index, not a concordance, as he told me ruefully; so he patiently set to work striking out the product of hours of labor. To the suggestion, offered modestly by the president of a large public service corporation, that he might use cards, he replied: "Yes, I guess that would be more up-to-date, but this is the way I'm used to." Once he said to me: "I have tried and failed so many times and lost so much time by it. I discarded two note-systems before I got the one I have." All these time-saving devices look very obvious now; but they were not so when Sumner was young.

II

It is sometimes announced, with pontifical solemnity, generally by some oracle who has done neither the one nor the other well, that research and teaching are incompatible. They were not, in Sumner's case. He stood out among the teachers of his generation, from the time when "he broke upon us like a cold spring in the desert", as a man in the class of 1874 put it, up to

near the end of his service. I do not know how many students he had in his classes, all those years; the only figures at hand cover the numbers in his one undergraduate course, for seniors only, on "The Science of Society". During the last fifteen years of his service, this course had an attendance of about 3,000, all told. But this number is only a fraction of his student-following. Thousands more must be added to get his lifetime total, for from 1872 to 1890, before "The Science of Society" was offered, he had a number of courses and they were very popular. He had become an institution while yet young; in 1895 we were given to understand by upper classmen that no man had earned a real Yale B.A. unless he had had Old Bill.

There is another pronouncement set afloat by wiseacres in the field of education, namely, that nothing can be taught through the large lecture course. Nothing can be so taught, doubtless, by the people who set up that major premise. Probably they speak out of their own experience—possibly in derogation of the so-called "information" courses of abler men. But men like Sumner could teach classes of 300 quite as effectively as many a lesser light could instruct ten, even if the ten might sip tea and suck churchwarden pipes during the process. Sumner was, above all, the great teacher of young men.

In his teaching he placated nobody. He was a formidable figure and a top-sergeant for discipline. He never tried to please, cajole, or amuse us. He did not tell stories. He was always there and in the saddle, when he was not actually flat on his back in bed, and the reins were always tight. There was a written test—the abhorred ten-minute paper, which is one of the most effective of teaching devices—every day we met. Sumner had always read the day's lesson the evening before; "I always get

my lesson, just like a student". In general, he asked nothing of us that he did not exact of himself. He treated us as if we had minds and character and were there for business, never talked down to us but set before us exactly what he thought to be the truth, assuming, as a matter of course, that that was what we had come to get. Under such treatment, we presently did come to get it, even though we had entered the course only because our elders told us to. Particularly did he open our minds with his sledgehammer blows; as one man put it, he cracked our skulls open so there was room for brain-expansion.

It is impossible to convey an impression of his teaching without some description of the man (to which I am coming in a moment); for, when all is said, our dominant feeling was that we were facing a presence. Sumner's teaching, someone has said, was a combination of manner, matter, and method. That he did not lack matter should be evident from the foregoing; it is enough to say that no one of us had any doubt about his being in possession of all the "dope" there was. He despised "method" as such. "The way to do it is to use common sense; you start off and go right along", was about all he would say on that score. That was what he did. He was supremely honest and fearless as a matter of course, without parade; and we, with the usual homage of honest and fearless youth, not yet versed in stratagem and compromise, trailed eagerly along after him, glorying in him, and were ready to side with him, hands down, in his many battles. I might almost say, to portray our loyalty, that we would rather have been defeated with him than victorious with his opponents.

It takes personality, of course, to evoke such an attitude in young men. Mere

learning will not do it. We felt toward him somewhat as Kipling's Norsemen toward their leader, who was "red as a red bear," and to his pagans a god; "it was he who cheered them and slew them impartially as he thought best for their needs". His personality was tremendous; still, it could not have held us to loyalty from youth past middle age had it not been accompanied by a knowledge and wisdom which have been verified as we have lived on beyond the range of his eye and voice.

I had heard of Old Bill long before I saw him and had, of course, evolved a mental picture of him. I had no idea of his age (which was fifty-five) except from the adjective, old, which I took to mean aged. When I first came into his presence, I was more than a little astonished. He did not look old at all. His "magnificent baldness" and "iron voice" have formed the themes of several rhapsodical accounts. I can say of those attributes that they were thus correctly, if poetically, described. But there were no signs of decrepitude at all. Very likely he would have looked somewhat older to 1932 eyes than to those of the 90's; he had not played tennis or golf like the ancients of today; but he looked young beside his colleagues of equal or fewer years.

For one thing, at a time when beards went with age, he was almost clean-shaven; and his short moustache and the close-clipped fringe of hair that bounded his baldness were not gray. His complexion was fresh rather than of scholarly pallor and his body looked powerful. He wore no glasses, though he clapped on a pince-nez, rather fiercely, when he had something to read. Furthermore, he was immaculately groomed and clad, a little oldfashioned sometimes, with his tie drawn through a gold band. Professor Henry Beers used to say that he was the

sole Yale instructor, in the '60's, who dressed fastidiously, even a little foppishly, and strode about as if he were a self-respecting man of the world.

There was about him a combination of dour strength and scrupulous personal fastidiousness. He always looked as if he had just emerged from the bath. He was never slovenly in person, clothing, language, or thought. Except for his face, his hands were his most arresting feature. The fingers were long and bony—he had a way of enforcing a point by the use of an index-finger, which seemed to some of us who were in the front seats, literally under him, incredibly elongated. The unexpected about his hand was the lifelessness of its grip; when he greeted you, there was no clasp at all; he merely let his hand rest passively in yours for an instant, hastily withdrawing it. This was probably one of the forms taken by his dislike of contact, but it was incongruous and disconcerting, even after repeated experience of it. Sumner hated to be touched, I think; once a colleague, having joined us as we walked, as he left us slapped Sumner on the shoulder, saying: "Well, Yale has *some* great teachers, anyway!" We went on a few yards; then Sumner, having looked over his shoulder at the departing slapper, leaned toward me and said in a tone of deep disgust: "He's a gusher!"

To describe Sumner's face is the task of someone more skillful with words than I am. The photographs reproduced as frontispieces to the four volumes of the "Collected Essays" are each excellent for its period in his life. There are a few details about his face that the camera did not catch or, perhaps, that the photographer smoothed out. Sumner's eyes were of a greenish hue; at least, they gave that impression. His upper lids were full and heavy, and the pupil appeared to be di-

lated; it alone seemed visible to one who faced the man, and the impression it gave was as of the end of a rifle-barrel sticking out of a firing-slot. The lower lids also were full and the eye appeared hooded—not so open as in the photographs, though his brows were not at all beetling. The eye was a piercing one, not on the order of the "smoldering anthracite furnace", but sharp and cold, and it did not seem to participate much in laugh or smile. I do not recall a twinkle, even when he laughed heartily. The students used to say that he looked like an old lion. That was an attempt to describe him in a stern mood. In any case, his eye was a redoubtable and formidable feature, and many there be who have quailed before it.

His nose was long and straight. He used to complain that his teeth were largely metal, but need not have been if it had been the fashion in his youth to take care of them; this usually led him to advert to "the good old times" which, he said, always turned out, on actual examination, to have been "the bad old times". The set of his mouth was stern and resolute. He could look far more disgusted, on occasion, than anyone else I ever saw. I cannot say that his nose actually turned up, but that was the impression one got. Disdain always seemed to me to take the place of anger among his facial expressions. He had plenty of practice in expressing detestation, engrossed as he was all his life in assaulting men and measures that seemed to him sordid and hallmarked with jobbery.

When Sumner was serious, he looked stern; and he was almost always serious while running his classes. During most of the time I knew him he was physically ailing and tortured with insomnia; he was frequently in deep depression, not only over his own health and its interference

with his work, but because his wife was not well. His whole life was wrapped up in her and it was worry over her that, he said, was shortening his life. He did not whine over his calamities; he brooded. If he was naturally brusque in his external relations, these untoward circumstances in his life could do little to mitigate that mood. For a good part of his last fifteen years he was a very harassed man, and the front he presented was often, undoubtedly, stern and even forbidding.

This is the aspect of Sumner that has been caught up by softheaded, sentimental objectors to his conclusions as to social policies. And it is to be admitted that he took a kind of malicious pleasure in further shocking that species of tender and tearful spirit. "How about the poor?" objected an unctuous colleague from the Divinity School. "The poor?" Sumner gave back. "Let 'em die! Let 'em die!" He never learned to suffer a fool gladly—no mature, male fool, at any rate. Nevertheless, his patience with a foolish, ignorant, and wavering young man is something to which I can bear personal witness; I can still hear his sardonic chuckle over this and that outburst of mine, and there was a great deal of bother that I made for him of which I knew nothing at the time. He bore it silently for his sins, I suppose, and because he himself recalled his own "splashings around, like a puppy in a mill-pond".

I am going to assert flatly, as to this matter of hardheartedness, merely that it was not so. He was very sensitive to the woes of others. "Yes, the suffering righteous!" was his usual comment on a tale of undeserved calamity, and in many a case, the details of which he allowed no one to know, he went to the utmost pains to rectify the situation. The place of the drunkard was in the gutter, as he implacably as-

serted; yes, but he himself would have been the first to pull him out of it. "We have got to be patient with each other" was often on his lips. In short, he was a great-hearted, generous soul; it was because the woes of men hurt him as they did that he was so inexorably truthful about stating the facts about life at their hardest and also so ruthless in his denunciation of predatory shamers and oily hypocrites. Those who are shocked by the earlier chapters of "Social Classes" seldom, apparently, read on through the last one, which is entitled: "Wherefore We Should Love One Another".

The most senseless criticism of Sumner, as of Spencer, has to do with his asserted championship of *laissez-faire*. Anyone who surveys with the most modest intelligence the life of Sumner, or of Spencer, ought to see that both men spent their life-blood fighting that which is. Neither of them passively let things slide. Mr. Hammond Lamont once wrote that his profound respect for Sumner was based very largely upon his courage in standing out for free trade almost alone—in fighting entrenched protectionism almost singlehanded when others had laid down their arms. The common way of striving for progress is by uninformed meddling, and it was against this banal and disastrous policy that the advocates of *laissez-faire* took their stand. I challenge anyone to name a prominent so-called advocate of *laissez-faire* who was not active against the abuses of his time.

What Spencer and the rest were aiming at was intelligent interference as against ignorant meddling; their "Hands Off!" referred only to the cane-poking crowd, not to the engineer who knows the machinery. The instructed reformer ought to enshrine the memory of these traduced men of sense; an assault upon them merely indicates the kind of mind the attacker

possesses. Spencer was something of an old maid and perhaps a little feline now and then; he may pall upon one a little. But Sumner, with all his hard hitting—indeed, in good part, just because of it—ought to appeal to anyone who, in these times, prays: “O God, give us a Man!” He appealed to at least one Socialist, a drug-clerk who spent his savings on books. “I like Sumner,” he said. “But,” I replied, “he attacks all your pet beliefs”. “Yes,” was the reply, “but he can *hit so hard!*” Those who have abhorred Sumner are the kind who, as Sumner said, “begin to whine and cry when the blows begin to fall”.

III

The greatness of Sumner's teaching, whether from the platform or through the written word, lay very largely in his insight. I do not mean by that term either “intuition” or “revelation”; I mean the understanding that comes from keen and hard intellectual labor over facts. He cut at once to the core of an issue and expressed it in simple, often homely language. “The way to raise wages is to work, not to not work”. “That's because they want to get their hands into your pockets.” “If you ever live in a community run by a committee, *be on the committee!*” His titles were often of this arresting type: “On a New Philosophy: That Poverty is the Best Policy.” “That We Must Have Few Men, if We Want Strong Men;” “That it is Not Wicked to be Rich; Nay, Even, That it is Not Wicked to be Richer Than One's Neighbor;” “Protectionism, the -ism Which Teaches That Waste Makes Wealth;” “The Absurd Attempt to Make the World Over;” “The Conquest of the United States by Spain.”

Because of his insight, Sumner's essays remain timely; the simple, homely truth

does not become antedated. Consider the Proverbs of Solomon. Man after man has recorded that he has been re-reading these essays, to be astonished at their timeliness. Mr. Dwight W. Morrow stated, about ten years ago, that he had recently been asked what was the latest best thing on ship-subsidies, and had replied unhesitatingly: “Sumner's little article, ‘Shall Americans Own Ships?’ written in 1881”. The Democrats would have been well advised to have stood, in 1928 as in 1932, upon Sumner's tariff views, as voiced in the terse little “Protectionism”. One prominent writer on social questions warned the Socialists that when they had got through answering all the rest of their critics, they still had the most difficult one left, in Sumner.

Scarcely a single major issue of the present remains untreated in his writings: war, arbitration, governmental extravagance, inflation, the tariff, wages, trades-unions, the status of woman, modern marriage, education; and whatever he touches, he illuminates. He is always provocative in his positiveness; one rejoices over him or is enraged at him, but not indifferent.

Some years ago, there was a committee appointed to draw up a list of the best reading for all time in all branches of culture. It was a foolish task, very likely; at any rate, it came to nothing; but the committee was a good one, under the chairmanship of the present Governor of Connecticut. No works less than fifty years old were to be listed. None were, except Sumner's “Essays”. Their inclusion was proposed by a man who had not studied with Sumner, as the most thought-provoking reading, to judge by its actual effects, that he had ever seen in young men's hands.

The late Franklin Giddings spoke of “Sumner, whom, now he is gone, we are

beginning to recognize as perhaps the most consistently sociological if not the greatest of sociologists". I suppose the meaning is that Sumner was the most strictly scientific of them all. I myself think him the foremost student of society who has ever lived. It is needless to say, to any one who knew his humble idea of his own doings, that he harbored no such sentiment about himself. He had his doubts about "Folkways", especially since he felt that his old age and invalidism had made a poor job of it. The labor of composition that once rested so lightly upon him had come, he said, to bear him down and wear him out. "Folkways" certainly lacks the fire and dash of the "Essays"; it is in parts hard reading; it is rather formless; but it is one of the classics of the subject, to be left as it stands. It is more than that; it is becoming a part of modern thought. Some of us have watched the term *mores* gradually making an appearance, first in technical literature, then in editorials and articles in newspapers and magazines, and at length in works of fiction. Twenty years ago I used to clip passages where it occurred; nowadays there are too many of them. As *agnostic* and *natural selection* suggest Huxley and Darwin, so do *mores* and "The Forgotten Man" recall Sumner.

I dare assert that "Folkways" represents a feat of intellect comparable with those of the recognized synthesizers in other ranges. What Sumner did was to seize upon the diffuse and volatile "custom" and give it body, substance, allocation, or whatever one may call it; after he had analyzed the folkways and mores, there was no further excuse for handling the custom-conception in the old vague way. And, since the folkways and mores are the germ out of which every institution of society has developed, they are to the social sciences what the cell is to biology.

Though plenty of people, Shakespeare among them, have realized the basic nature of custom, no one before Sumner grasped the evanescent thing, localized it, labelled it, and reduced it to manageability. While Goethe and others had their ink-lings, and correct ones, about evolution, it was not until Darwin came along with all his laboriously gathered facts that partial guesses and more or less vague adumbrations, incapable of demonstration, became trustworthy hypotheses. Similarly with Sumner and his facts; for myself, I confidently expect that the future will list him as the first scholar who deliberately and consistently applied the inductive method to the study of society as a whole. In maintaining this, I do not mean to detract one iota from Spencer's fully deserved fame as the father of sociology—only Spencer was not an inductive scientist except as he was forced to be, especially in his "Principles of Sociology", but essentially a philosopher with a grand, all-embracing, thin-spread, unproductive formula.

IV

Sumner, despite the handicaps of his old-fashioned and non-scientific training, was of the Darwin type. The struggles that he waged with himself, in the effort to get rid of his theological and metaphysical grounding, "to chuck all that stuff overboard", were known only to his own soul; but they were fierce and long, and he bore many a scar away from the fight. He labored painfully, he said, to acquire a mean knowledge of biology and the rest of the natural sciences. He went back and brushed up his forgotten mathematics and then learned the calculus; he studied anatomy as he could out of books, as a basis for an understanding of physical anthropology. It is my opinion that the

change he wrought in himself and his trend of thought constitutes perhaps his greatest achievement; certainly without it he could never have written "Folkways" or planned "The Science of Society".

He was one of those pioneers who know all about a subject because they have stood by its cradle and grown up with it. Dana knew all geology; his successors are physical geographers, structural geologists, mineralogists, and so on. So Sumner cultivated all the social sciences, collecting in the ranges of them all: physical and historical anthropology, ethnography, ethnology, sociology, demography, demology, political science, and economics. The course in history which some of us most vividly remember is his "Financial and Political History of the United States", which, even in those days of small graduate schools, had an attendance of forty, including delegations from the professional schools and members of the faculty. Probably no one else will ever know the whole range of the social sciences as he did. He had to give up this and that—"Dead babies; I've put tombstones over them all"—and his successors have had to concentrate still more. He certainly started from scratch, for he had no instruction in any one of the several lines he pursued and developed.

Perhaps this is one of the reasons, in addition to his distaste for shams, why he was so impatient with "methodology". "The way to learn to read a foreign language," he said, "is to sit down and learn it." Upon one occasion, some of the prototypes of the modern educational racketeer had a meeting in Hartford on methods of teaching. It was to be largely attended by Connecticut school-teachers, in whose interest Sumner had labored much. He was asked to address the meeting and at first refused. Later, he thought better

of his decision and accepted; he found, he said, that he had a little to say. He confined himself to a satire on method-madness:

I knew a fellow in my college class who got all worked up over the best way to study. He had lots of theories. He tried it lying on his back; flat on his stomach; sitting down; standing up; standing on one leg; and so on. When the examination came, he flunked. He hadn't *studied* at all.

Sumner was a terrific debater. I asked him once where he got his ability. "Oh," he replied, "in college we used to jaw around all night over everything." He was far from urbane in debate; in faculty discussions, said one of his contemporaries, he was generally provocative at first and got a number of the men by the ears; then, as they grew hot, he became cooler and cooler and wound up in command of the situation. He was likely to become personal on occasion, though I never saw him angry.

This is one of the reasons, I suppose, why he seemed arrogant. On one public occasion he debated with a rather minor statesman who had considerable manner, together with luxuriant side-burns. This man came upon the platform urbanely, smiling, bowing, and rubbing his hands together in the approved style of the suave diplomat. His speech was of the type belonging with his preliminary warm-up. When Sumner's turn came, he too advanced mincingly, grinning sardonically, and winding his incredibly long fingers about. The unfitness of his face and form to such evolutions smote the audience where it lived; and his reply was as withering as his entrance had been deliberately grotesque.

Once, in a faculty meeting, when his pet abomination, philosophy, was on the carpet, some one used the term epistemology.

"Epistemology!" interrupted Sumner, spacing out his words in his indescribable fashion, "What—*is*—epistemology?" A rather fiery but perky colleague sprang to the defense: "I do not see, Mr. Chairman, that there is any occasion to employ sarcasm over this terminology. All disciplines have their special and distinctive terminology. Indeed, perhaps Professor Sumner will admit that even his own subject has its terminology. I see no reason. . . ." and so on. Sumner regarded the speaker for a moment with a look of mock humility, then remarked: "Now—I feel as if I were in Sunday-school."

V

He was certainly *fortiter in modo* as well as *in re*. His *suaviter* was reserved for women and children. Men he regarded as creatures to be handled without gloves; but he was all softness, in fact, he was chicken-hearted, when it came to women and especially babies. "Yes," he said once, "babies are sometimes a bore, but I like 'em all. I'd like to see my children grow up all over again." Once we came to a small, plump child, incredibly soiled, who was lying on the sidewalk on his stomach, busily making marks in a scrubby notebook with a pencil-stump. "What a dirty little boy!" Sumner chuckled. "I bet his mother—why, it's Tommy!" as he recognized an acquaintance. "Tommy, what are you doing?" "Takin' down automobile numbers," replied Tommy, not allowing himself to be diverted. "Good! That's the way to do it!" Sumner encouraged. "Get at the facts!"

Then, to me: "Boys are a nuisance sometimes, but, darn it! they're worth it! But what will his mother say? She's the one that'll have to clean him up."

"It's this way about children," he once

said to me. "It's cumulative. The more you love them, the more you sacrifice; and the more you sacrifice, the more you love."

These random reminiscences could be strung out rather indefinitely; but I am trying merely to produce a kind of snapshot of a man who, if I am not greatly mistaken, is destined to be known and appreciated more fully and by an ever wider circle, as time goes on. It occurs to me to mention, before I close, that Sumner, while often accused of being a henchman of Capital, was himself the son of a mechanic who earned less than \$2 a day in the railroad shops in Hartford. He himself clerked in a furniture store before he went to college. As a professor, he never received over \$4000 a year, and that only in the last few years of his service. He made little from his books; on one occasion, when he received \$60 as royalty on "Folkways", he rather gloated: "It's as good as a bond! I never got so much from any of my other books." Once he recounted a conversation with his classmate, William Collins Whitney. "Bill Whitney said to me: 'Bill, did you ever get a raise?' 'Yes,' said I, 'one raise, awhile ago.' 'How much?' he asked. 'Two hundred and fifty', I replied, and Bill laughed as if he were at a nigger show."

Sumner never complained about his salary; indeed, it was about what every one else in the big colleges, in those days, was getting. He was identified with Yale and never contemplated going elsewhere, even when William R. Harper was trying to allure eminent men to help him found the University of Chicago. The only time he thought of leaving was when President Porter tried to prevent him from using Spencer in his classes; but his friends urged him to stay by and see the obscurantists buried, and he did. He won his fight with the president. It is doubtful if

he cared whether he used the book or not; but by his resistance he strengthened a precedent that has been salutary.

As regards salary, the great teachers are sure to get less than they deserve; but it must be remembered that they are exceedingly few and far between and that many small men draw more than they earn. Some of the latter would get too much if they served for nothing; they should be hired to keep out of the profession. As a profession, college teaching is not so badly under-rewarded. At any rate, Sumner drew the level salary paid, in his time, to all permanent officers of the college—a non-bargaining system that has its points. “After a while,” he once remarked, “you young fellows will be getting twice what we get now. It can’t be otherwise. But,” he added, after a mo-

ment, prophetically, “the way things look along ahead, it may not buy any more for you than ours does for us.”

Christmas Day, 1909, was a stormy Sunday, with a heavy fall of snow. The next day Sumner was due in New York, to read an address as president of the American Sociological Society. He was, at the time, very shaky and scant of breath, but he caught his train, though the trolley-cars were not yet running on schedule, and got as far as the Murray Hill Hotel. There he collapsed. His presidential address was in his suitcase; it was an essay on “Religion and the Mores”, typed, carefully revised, and ready for delivery. Nothing could have been more in keeping with his life than this last episode, where he struggled up to the battle-line, mortally exhausted, but armed and resolute.

HOME SWEET HOME

BY JOHN FANTE

I AM singing now, for soon I shall be home. There will be a great welcome for me. There will be spaghetti and wine and salami. My mother will spread a great table piled high with the delicacies of my boyhood. It will all be for me. The love of my mother will come over the table, and my brothers and my sister will be happy to see me among them again, for I am to them the big brother who never errs, and they will be a little envious of the welcome that is poured upon me, and how they will laugh at the things I say, and how they will smile when they see me swallow those squirming forkfuls of spaghetti, and shout for more cheese, and roar my pleasure. For they are my people, and I will have returned to them and to the love of my mother.

I shall pass my glass to my father, and I will say, "More of that wine, Pa," and he will smile and pour the red stuff with a sweet taste into my glass, and I will say, "Atta boy!" and I will swallow it slowly and deeply, feeling it warm my belly, tingling my heart, singing a song to my ears. And my mother will say, "Not too fast, my son," and I will look upon my mother, and I will see the same eyes that I have caused to weep so many, many times, and my bones will get that blunt feeling of remorse, but it will only endure a second, and I will say to my mother, "Ah Ma, don't you worry about this guy, he'll be all right," and my mother will smile with the happiness that only my mother knows,

and my father will smile a little too, for he will be looking at his own flesh and blood, and I will get a throb in my chest, and I will avoid my father's eyes, for they will not be able to conceal their happiness.

That will make me feel very tenderly jubilant, but I will not show it in my face, but my eyes, looking down at the yellow spaghetti, will not be able to hide it, and my father will catch the twinkle there, but he will look away in a flash, for it will make him as bashful as a boy, and I bet he will do some retrospecting, and think about me in the years of my boyhood, and he will see every minute and second of my twenty-one years in the fleeting glance of my eyes, and I will think exactly the same thoughts, for we are of the same flesh and bone, and the stuff of my brain and spine are the stuff of his, and so we will think the same things together, and each will know that the other is thinking the same things.

Our thought will be of a day in Colorado and another welcome spread, when both my father and I got very drunk, and yet remained brutally sober, and I began to curse him for the distorted body he had given my mother, and he cursed me for the misery I had flung upon her, and we grew angrier and angrier, and my mother tried to make peace, and presently my father lost himself in an insane passion to make me suffer for the things I had said, and at that same second I too saw scarlet before my eyes, and the two of us leaped

upon each other, and we were like two animals, and I knocked my father to the floor, and he fell with a thud, and, lying on the floor, began to cry like a little child.

I was but eighteen then. I looked at my fist that had knocked my father to the floor, and I looked up to the ceiling, my heart pounding, and I lifted my fist to the ceiling, and I saw a blue mark on the knuckles, and I screamed, "Jesus Christ, what have I done? Oh, Jesus Christ, cut my arm off! Quick! Quick! Oh, Jesus Christ, cut it off!" And there on the floor my father lay, and he was crying, and it was not the weeping of the sentimental drunk, but it was the weeping of a man who had seen his little god of wax melt in the blistering sun. And there stood my mother with her hands pressed to her temples, and her distorted body that my father gave her, and the wrinkles and sad eyes that were gifts from me, and my mother knew not what to do, for there were her son and her man fighting over old scars.

The scars could not be healed, but they could be soothed, and now the flesh of her flesh and the man of her life were at each other's guilty throats in the way of fanatics, and in the anger of each there was no defense of her glorious wifehood and motherhood, but only the beastly whining and snarling of two who shouted at each other, and bruised each other. "It is you who are the cause!" "No! It is you." My mother saw me there, eighteen years out of her womb, and my father was on the floor, and I was his little wax god who had melted in the blistering sun.

So that is why I will not look into the eyes of my father after I gulp my electrifying wine, and that is what each of us will think, and we will not have forgotten, but our spirits will be at peace, and in a whirl of bitter silence that scene of three years

past will go through us, and I will make a boisterous pretense at nonsense, and my father will be ready to leap into the unimportance of it, and in the hearts of my brothers and sister will come a merriment that will not last long, and in the mind of my mother. . . . Ah God, forgive my father and me!

II

But the wine from fresh grapes, purple-red and bitter sweet, will bring delight to that hour of welcome, and we shall all have a fill of it. Even my youngest brother, who does not like it, will be allowed to drink perhaps two glasses. He will watch me closely. He will hold his glass as I hold mine, and he will say "Ahhh" when he feels the last drop of it in his mouth, just as I will say it. And he will rub his belly, concealing the unpleasantness, and say, "Boy! That's swell stuff. Gimme some more." And my mother will say softly, "No more, my son." And my father will yell, "Hey! Who the hell do you think you are?"

My sister, who has spoken only a little, will primp for me. She will be seated next to my mother, and I will steal glances at her, and I will see that she is becoming more beautiful with every breath. I will be amazed again at the loveliness of her immense brown eyes, which are like those of some giant squirrel, and she will know that I am peeping surreptitiously at her, and she will be inwardly singing with happiness, and I will see that her beauty is that which drew my father to my mother when he came to America thirty years before, a conceited young Italian, conceited even as I am. My mother will be at my sister's side at the table, and I will study the faces of the two, and I will vow that my sister shall not have the agony which has

been my mother's, and I will see my sister lift her chin disdainfully at the remarks of my little brother, and he will shout, "Aw, you're not so smart. You needn't show off just because Jimmy is home." My sister will transform her face to pink-scarlet, and she will look suddenly at me, and I will be delighted by her squirrel eyes, and she will glare at my brother and say, "And what about you? What about you, playing like you like wine, just because he's home?" And my little brother will say, "Aw, keep still." And my father will say, "Hey! How many times do I have to tell you to cut out that talk?" And my brother will say, "Well, she started it." And my mother will say softly, "Let's all be nice today. Let's not have one fight."

My plate will be empty now, the tomato juice and strands of cheese having been skilfully mopped up with a lump of bread. My mother will see its glistening emptiness, and she will look at my cheeks and say, "You look awful thin, Jimmy. You better eat a lot." And I will battle with another dish of the stringy, cheesy spaghetti, for my mother will be injured within if I do not eat until I am left gasping for breath. There will be, too, a dish of salted anchovies to pick at, and there will be salami, the casing already peeled away, and there will be more and more wine, and there will be tomatoes prepared especially for me, drowned in yellow olive oil, touched with the zestful tang of garlic juice, and at my father's plate will be a saucer filled with garlic, toasted to a crisp.

He will eat it with great noise, and as always my sister will say, and we will all laugh, "There goes the garlic!" My father will grin and say the same old thing, "You people don't know what's good. . . . Try it!" And my sister will turn her lips and draw away from the table and close her big, squirrel eyes and go "Grrrrrrr!" And

of course we will all then listen to my father's story of his boyhood when he had nothing to eat but garlic for a week, and long before he has finished we will have gone ahead of him in his story and said aloud the words which he will laboriously, eventually come to, and he will threaten to kill us, and my mother will try to be composed and impartial, but she will not be able to resist the feathers which tickle all but my father, and soon the table will shake with our laughter, and my father will roar like a wild beast.

My brother Tommie will then say, "Cut-ton, cutton, cutton, where's the cutton?" And that will bring even lustier laughs, for he is mimicking the crippled English of my father, who says cutton, but means cotton. And then my sister will say, "I love warmelon." Laughter, laughter, laughter. For that is my father's way of saying watermelon. My father will grind his garlic in his teeth and be silent. And my brother will say, "Bose of you are dutty, hoggly, hanimals."

Oh man! That will be the end of our joy, for my father will now rise from his place and seize my brother by the ear, and kick him in the seat with each step as he leads him to the back porch. My brother will rub his seat and laugh and cry, and my father will return to his place at the table. My brother will shout through the door, "Papa's han hanimal! Papa's han hanimal!" And my father will scrape his chair legs on the floor, and my brother will hear them, and off he will go to his friends, laughing and shouting as he runs, "Papa's han hanimal!"

We will eat in silence for awhile, no sound save the tinkling forks and knives. We are settled to the business of eating now, and no one speaks.

My father will say, "Where's the napkins?"

My mother will say, innocently, "Oh, didn't you get one?"

"What kind of a house is this, without napkins?"

My sister will go for the napkins.

"Bring me one," I will say.

"All right."

"Me too," my brother Pete will say.

"What's wrong?" my sister will ask him. "Are you crippled?"

And so I will be among my people, sitting at the welcome supper my mother has prepared, and my father, my sister, and my younger brother will be gathered around the table. My youngest brother, who is fifteen, will have gone away laughing at the stumbling language of my father, who is fifty-two. At his side will be seated my sister, who is seventeen, and next to her my brother Pete, eating in silence, who is nineteen, and my mother, whose eyes are far too large, who is forty-nine, who has a broken body, who has grey hair at her temples, who is daily losing her hearing. And I am twenty-one, and I understand my people better than they understand one another.

III

I will look at my father over the rim of my wine glass. I will see myself. I will know again the streak of cruelty and treachery within me by looking at my father. I will look at the hands of my father, and a turning and a grinding will go on within me, for my father still has the seeds of greatness in him, but they have been choked by the treachery and cruelty that I know, always too late, crouches in me. My father will catch the feeling in me, and in his eyes it will come out for me to look upon, and he will see the same lurking in my eyes, and we will not have strong enough chins to glare at

each other, and let those two pairs of eyes collide, and kill that lurking which lies in both our eyes.

Another feeling will come across the table, and we will not know what to do with it, for we loathe it, and that will be shame. We will sense it, and we will be hurt from it, but we have not hands to slug it, or to caress it. And so we will look away, and we will sneak glances at one another. And I know it shall always be so, and my father knows. My father will keep on filling my wine glass, and together we will drink, and we shall always feel that kindredness which is a gorge neither of us can leap.

I will look at my father's hands.

I will say, "Are you working?"

He will answer, "No. I'm not working."

"No work here, eh?"

"No, no work here."

"Any work in Sacramento?"

"No, no work in Sacramento."

I will be silent then, for I know I have touched a painful spot, and he will not have sympathy. He will fight it away.

I will speak about myself. I will make my father envious. He knows that I, too, have the seeds of greatness in me, but my father believes they will be choked up by the treachery which is the heritage of both father and son. I am younger than my father: my hopes scream to the skies. His have dwindled to despair. I know my father sees me at fifty-two, and I at fifty-two am my father. What I will say will please him and yet sadden him.

I will say, "Well, in a few days there'll be a check in the mail for me." I will say this to my father about the manuscript I am now writing.

"You say that a lot."

I will grow angry at this from my father.

"Yes, yes. Moreover, you'll hear it plenty more."

My father will drink more wine, and as he lowers his glass I will see a smile turning his lips faintly. He will be amused by my pugnacity.

My mother will say, "Please. Let's all be happy. Let's all hope for the best, and not quarrel."

I will say, "I'm not quarreling, Ma."

My sister will say, "I read your story in the magazine. I knew you'd write against the Church."

I will say, "Don't be dumb. That wasn't against the Church."

This will not interest my father, for he does not care what I write, nor does he read it. I will drink wine now, for I must prepare myself for the question which my mother will now ask.

She will say, "Do you go to Mass every Sunday, my Jim?"

I will answer, "Sometimes, Ma. Sometimes." I will be lying.

She will ask, "Do you still read books against God?"

I will say, lying again, "Not any more, Ma."

And I will look at the face of my mother, and I will remember a night when we lived in the South, and I came home, and I saw my mother in tears, and sick unto death, and the doctor was called, and he saved my mother, and he came out of the room wherein my mother lay, and he held a book in his hand, and he handed it to me, and he said, "This is the cause. If you must read such stuff as this, do it where your mother can't see you." When I looked at the book, I saw that it was "The Anti-Christ." Now I will be home soon, and my mother will ask if I read books against God, and I will answer that I do not.

My sister will say, "Why do you write about your family all the time?"

I will shrug. "Why not?"

"You haven't any pride."

"Sez you."

I will be conscious of the splendid beauty of my flowering sister, and will be proud that she has accused me of unpride.

My taciturn brother Pete will assert himself now. He will tell of his feats on the diamond.

He will say, "Pitched a three-hit game last Sunday."

My father, who roots for my brother, and gets great praise for the ability of my brother, will say, "He's some boy, that Petruchi, that Pietro. The best pitcher in this town."

I will say then, "Well, if Pete can do it, I guess I'm able to hold them to *two* hits."

My father will not answer, for he knows that I am a better pitcher than my brother, and my brother knows it too, but I have put baseball behind me now, and they know it, and they respect me, and they will not comment.

Now my mother will ask if all are finished, the plates will be passed to her, and she will scrape them and carry them into the kitchen. My sister, her squirrel eyes flashing over the tablecloth for spots, will rise and help my mother. My father will refill the wine glasses. We will drink in silence, conscious that my sister and mother have gone.

IV

Then will come the triumph of the meal—a sweetmeat made by my mother. It will be a cake of eggs, cheese, lemon peel and cinnamon. We will shout when my mother carries it in, her face happy in this, her little moment.

She will say, "For Jim." I will leap to my feet and kiss my mother where her shoulder curves to meet her neck, where a kiss tickles, and she will laugh in ecstasy,

and I will turn her face to look upon it, and there will be tears, and she will say, "Thank God for my Jim!"

My father and my brother will not look at us, for neither of them has ever gone away to return to sentimental embraces. Those are things which they see only in picture shows.

I will say to my mother, "Thank whatever gods there be for you."

"Listen to the atheist," my sister will say.

I will answer, "Atheist? When I use the plural? You mean pantheist."

"I told you a million times I don't know what that means."

"Look it up, squirrel eyes." And that will bring smiles.

And my father will surely say, "You better leave them books alone."

My brother Pete will say, "Do you think the Yanks have a chance?"

My sister will now say what she has been bubbling to tell all this time.

"I have a new boy friend. Gee, he's keen."

And then the whole family will attack her.

My mother, "You're too young for boy friends."

My father, "I'll kill that bum if he hangs around here."

My brother, "Aw, he's no good."

How my sister will defend her new boy friend! Her face will change to pink, her arms will grow hard, and her white teeth will bite the words. She will threaten to run away and never return. She will seize her napkin, twisting it in her fingers. She will fire denunciations at each reviler, and I will understand that she is right, and that my people are unfair and wrong.

I will say, "Why don't you bring him here to meet your father and mother? Maybe that would help."

And she will stare at the four bare walls,

at the stiff furniture, the curtainless windows, the carpetless floors gone grey with age, and with the cracks between boards pressed smooth with dirt.

I will say nothing. No one will speak, but around the table will be four people who feel the great pain of poverty, and my father, whose hopes are despairs, will be hurt most painfully.

Maybe, as he sometimes does, he will say, "Ah well, better days are coming." But that, I will remember from Nietzsche, is hope—the first sign of defeat. My father will tremblingly, avidly drain his glass, fill it, and drain it again. His hand will go out to my sister, and he will chuck her under the chin.

"Your father's no good," he will say.

And my sister, "Don't be silly."

My mother will cut away a huge piece of cake and carry it into the kitchen. That will be for my little brother Tommie, who has run away laughing at the bungling speech of my father. Tonight he will come home and find his cake in the pantry. Maybe before he returns I will go into the pantry and steal it for myself. Everyone but my mother will be likely to do that.

The dinner will be ended now. The wine pitcher, a huge thing with a capacity of two gallons, will be drained. Outside, darkness will be coming. A car or two will pass, with lights glassy and glaring.

My brother will say, "I wish we had a radio."

My father will put on his hat, and in shirt-sleeves he will go away to the pool-hall.

My mother will come out of the kitchen to the front door and say to my father as he descends the porch steps, "Aren't you going to stay home this one night when Jim gets home?"

"What for?" he will answer. "There ain't nothing for me here."

And I will hear him, and I will know that he is right. He will go down the street, and I will know what is in his mind. Maybe he will meet my little brother, and my brother will run, and my father will shake his fist at him and shout, "Dutty hanimal!"

In the kitchen, my mother and sister will wash the dishes, my sister singing as she dries them, my mother before the sink, her apron with a round wet spot where she presses against the sink. My brother Pete will go to the backyard to oil his ball glove.

I will go to the front yard, light a cigarette, lie on my back on the lawn, and grow restless. The stars will begin to

twinkle, and I will think of a favorite line in "The Mysterious Universe": "And the total number of stars in the universe is probably something like the total number of grains of sand on all the sea shores of the world." I will linger with the words, and wish that I could have written such a line. I will think about my girl Tanya, who is far away, and I will see her in a red dress, and I will think about kissing her. She will come between me and the stars, and the whole sky will be filled with her.

I will get upon my feet and flip my cigarette, and wish I were with her, and not in this God-damned, God-forsaken, one-horse town.

THEOLOGY IN THE AMERICAN COURTS

BY B. H. HARTOGENSIS

UNDER the English Common Law, which the American colonies inherited from the Mother Country, with its Established Church, non-believers suffered numerous and onerous disabilities in the courts. Most Americans no doubt believe that all of this rubbish has now been swept away, but the fact is that in five States a witness called to testify is still disqualified unless he can pass a religious test, and that in eleven other States his unbelief, though it may not disqualify his testimony outright, may yet be used to impeach either his credibility, if he is living, or (in several States), if he is dead, his unsworn testimony, offered in evidence as a dying declaration. But such disqualifications are seldom listed and often must be deduced from decisions more or less apt.

What is meant by the term non-belief is well illustrated in the Declaration of Rights preceding the present Constitution of Maryland. As a qualification for jurors and witnesses otherwise competent, this document requires a belief in "a Supreme Being, and that under His dispensation they will be rewarded or punished, either in this world or in the world to come". If one cannot measure up to that requirement, then one is a non-believer, and, according to the highest appellate court of the State, should be rejected as "morally deficient". Similar words were used by a judge in a divorce case in Baltimore, when he had to refuse the essential testimony of a husband who was a non-believer.

It will be observed that the Maryland qualification requires belief not only in a Supreme Being, but also in one who will *punish*. It is interesting to note that wherever such theological qualifications are still in force, the emphasis is laid, not on belief in a Supreme Being whose nature and essence remains undefined, but on belief in One who will actually and certainly punish the witness should he swear falsely. The commonly recognized basis of a valid oath, that it bind the conscience of the affiant, is not enough. He must believe in and fear a vengeful God. In such States, if the witness bows to convention and submits to the oath as an empty form, he is liable to have his testimony thrown out. For then he has "blasphemously invoked the name of the Supreme Being in whose existence as the regarnder of truth and avenger of falsehood he does not believe."

This archaic and preposterous insistence upon belief in a Supreme Being who takes a personal interest in accurate testimony is particularly interesting in view of the lack of agreement about God and His attributes among Christians. When the law mentions the Christian religion, as it sometimes does, which one of the fifty-seven varieties of Christianity set out in the United States Census Bulletin (1928) is being spoken of? Is the Bible that is relied upon the Old Testament or the New; or if both Old and New, is it the King James Version, or the Douay Bible of the Catholics? And when divine pun-

ishment is mentioned, just what sort of punishment is meant, for the character of God's retribution is still a moot point among Christians. Very few of them still believe in a literal Hell of brimstone and fire, and even in the times when it was real and vivid to all believers, the actual maps and specifications of the place varied greatly. Today most Christians are apt to be somewhat vague in their notions about the Deity and the Life Hereafter, and are scarcely ready to acknowledge the orthodox faith that is necessary in certain American States if they are to qualify therein as witnesses or hold public office. They have never bothered to define precisely the term God, nor to inquire into such complex matters as the Resurrection and Immortality; yet, believing in Something binding on conscience, they are surely capable of taking the affirmation, if not the oath. But they can't qualify in five States. Likewise the person who suffers from what are commonly called doubts—and who may be far more religious by temperament than the average church-goer—finds himself thrown out as a witness.

II

What this means, then, is that some of the American courts are called upon to decide points of religious doctrine that Christians can't decide among themselves. The five States in which they are placed in this embarrassing position are Maryland, Arkansas, Delaware, New Jersey, and South Carolina. In Maryland and Arkansas the requirement is constitutional; in the others it is by statute or decision or both.

This outright disqualification by the court is not the only way in which the testimony of non-believers may be nullified. In other States (Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Massa-

chusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Carolina and Tennessee) even though an unbeliever may not be deprived of his constitutional right to offer testimony, yet his acknowledgment of his doubts may "go to his credibility". That is, the court, being advised of his unbelief, may nevertheless allow a full cross-examination of him on his belief, the purpose being to shake the confidence of the members of the jury in his credibility by appealing to their probable prejudices. The justification for this practice is the ancient doctrine that (to quote a decision in 1744 by Judge Willies) "the same credit ought not to be given to the infidel as to a Christian." In a recent North Carolina case the judge further justified such an examination by reference to Proverbs xxiii, 7: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." The provision in these eleven States allowing atheists to testify was made in an effort to bring the law in accord with enlightened views; but the permission to examine a witness's theological ideas—which Professor Wigmore calls "a sop to mediævalism"—has had the effect of canceling out the advance.

Sixteen States in all thus either refuse to receive the testimony of unbelievers at all, or allow an attack on the credibility of such witnesses, which in effect generally amounts to the same thing. These provisions as to competence or credibility lead to results both tragic and ludicrous. There was a recent case at Rockville, Md., in which the State's attorney found it necessary to *non pros* a trial for larceny when the testimony of the prosecution's sole witness could not by law be received because of his unbelief. Likewise, in Judge Van Ripper's court, under the New Jersey law, there occurred a case in which witnesses testifying but not on their own behalf were disqualified for this reason. The New Jersey law has been so construed that one who

does not believe in a God or a Supreme Being is not thereby rendered incompetent to testify in his own behalf, but his testimony is still not allowed in the case of another. To show the confusion which results from these elaborate compromises it is sufficient to recall that in a recent case such a party was allowed to testify in his own behalf, but not under oath or affirmation to tell the truth: he was thus held up to the jury as one apart from the law! This case, it should be added, is being appealed.

In North Carolina several recent trials of radical textile workers at Gastonia gave ample demonstration of the confusion and denial of justice which may result from such religious disabilities. Here the refusal to admit a non-believer's testimony in one court was followed by the admission without objection of like testimony in another court; which last testimony, however, was so discredited by an attack on the credibility of the witness that a painful impression of unfairness was left. In the latter case (State vs. Beal, 1930) the prosecution was permitted to discredit the testimony of a defense witness on the ground that "it is not an interference with the constitutional rights and liberties of the witness to be asked to disclose on cross examination if the oath which she allowed to be administered to her is binding." The questioning in the case was as follows:

Q. Do you believe in a Supreme Being who controls the destinies of man, who rewards their virtues or punishes their transgressions here or hereafter?

A. No, I believe that a man controls his own destiny.

Q. Therefore, taking an oath and appealing to this Supreme Being would have no effect on you?

A. I say any oath that I take to tell the truth has a binding effect on me.

Q. When you take it on the Bible and appeal to God, would that have any effect on you?

A. Yes, it is an oath. Any oath will have an effect on me.

Q. You might take it on an almanac, just as you would on a Bible and it would have the same effect on you, wouldn't it?

A. Yes, I'd tell the truth.

In this case, the overtones of economic controversy—it was a case which grew out of a mill strike—had already made it difficult enough to secure impartial and unimpassioned consideration. Despite the obvious irrelevance of this cross-examination, so far as it applied to the evidence, there is no question that the attack on the witness's credibility as a religious non-believer did weigh heavily with the jury. For there is really little to choose between denying a witness the right to testify on the grounds of his unbelief, and admitting an unbeliever only to attack him on his infidelity. "What boots it", was asked of Judge Stacy of the North Carolina Supreme Court (in a review of the above case) "whether he be refused the right to testify altogether, or, being permitted to testify, have his testimony discredited and rejected by the jury, if in the end they both mean the same thing?"

It is evident that not only atheists but anyone holding unusual religious views may be discredited by such tactics as were used against the witness in the North Carolina case. There are, indeed, instances, when efforts have been made to discredit Jesuits, Jews, Confucianists, Indians, and spiritualists with a view to proving that their views impaired their credibility as witnesses; and Negroes and children, some under twelve years of age, have frequently been examined as to their religious beliefs, with what strange and incomprehensible judicial findings one may well imagine.

Incidentally, the reference to taking an

oath on an almanac, in the colloquy quoted above, had more significance than mere sarcasm. Cases are actually reported in which failure to "kiss the book" rendered the oath of a witness nugatory though no other doubts as to his credibility had been raised, and caused a mistrial. Suppose a book other than the Bible were actually substituted; or suppose a Roman Catholic were sworn on Holy Writ other than his Douay Bible; or an orthodox Jew failed to wear his hat while kissing the Five Books of Moses in Hebrew; or a Chinaman were not allowed to break the prescribed dish while taking his obligation: it is not inconceivable that even such circumstances as these might, under the laws of our more backward States, be grounds for a mistrial.

Denied equal rights before the law, the disqualified are now questioning whether the testimony of accredited believers is impaired by their religious tenets. Consider here not merely the cacotheistic beliefs of exotic religions, and the oaths of Jesuits wrongfully (in my opinion) accused as unreliable; but also the broad general objection to the credibility of Fundamentalist Christians holding fast to the doctrines of predestination, of remission of sins by baptism, of penance by procuring absolution, and of divine forgiveness of earthly sins through the confessional. Such beliefs tend, consciously or unconsciously, to make for mental reservations and the suppression of the whole truth. Even Jews have their Day of Atonement, to ask forgiveness of sins against God. A Federal court in upholding a naturalization law as constitutional criticized the Chinese for having hazy conceptions of life in the hereafter. Surely neither Christians, Moslems nor Jews can prove that their hopes are either definite, precise or final; recall St. Paul's definition of

faith: "The evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews xi, 1).

In all those States where unbelief renders one incompetent as a witness there may also be repercussions outside the courtroom. Affidavits are constantly taken to tax assessments, custom house papers, and income tax reports, and for naturalization, registration, passports, and so on. These affidavits are frequently cast in a religious mold: North Carolina, for instance, requires a call to God that He strike dead the affiant if he shall falsify. If the affiant is later proved to be incompetent, great confusion and injustice may result.

III

Suppose, for instance, that one has been naturalized through the affidavits of incompetent witnesses: is one liable to be deported as an alien? There are cases in Pennsylvania and Connecticut where wills could not be probated, and were thrown out of court, for this reason. In New York City an over-zealous clerk mistakenly refused to accept an application for a marriage license because the bridegroom would not take the preliminary affidavit on his belief in God. In Maryland, a clerk of court could rightfully refuse a marriage license unless the affiant expressly believed in a God who would avenge false swearing. Without such a license, no clergyman could, under penalty, perform the marriage; and without a ceremony performed by a duly authorized parson the marriage would be illegal and the progeny illegitimate, since civil marriage is not recognized in Maryland.

The right to give testimony in court and the right to hold public office are often closely associated, both in popular and in judicial opinion. Religious tests for Federal officials are prohibited under the Fed-

eral Constitution, but there are six States in which such tests are required of everyone holding local office. Nearly all the State constitutions, in fact, prescribe an oath for every public officer, and most of them end with the phrase, "so help me God". This gives a certain color to the recent statement of a prominent Denver lawyer, writing in the *Marquette Law Review*, that "Christianity and democracy are not separable, if democracy is to persist".

That surely follows if the word and spirit of many of our State constitutions mean anything. The preambles to all of them save the constitutions of Oregon, Tennessee and West Virginia pay obeisance to God or to a Supreme Being, in spite of the fact that twenty-one constitutions also provide sententiously that "there shall be religious freedom and that no one can be molested for his religious opinions." Those of Maryland, Delaware and Massachusetts declare that it is a duty to worship God, and New Hampshire's says that the State's best security is such worship. In that of Vermont all Christians are called upon to observe the Lord's Day, and Mississippi, going still further, requires the reading of the Bible in its schools—a requirement which has also been made the basis for the prohibition of instruction in evolution.

Several explanations for the survival of these medieval qualifications may be offered. One is, of course, the inertia of the law. In the more advanced communities where such tests are still to be found this is probably the controlling explanation. In the more backward States another factor is the strong popular prejudice against (it might even be called abhorrence of) religious heterodoxy, which extends not infrequently to the bench itself. This is true religious intolerance—a spirit well

summed up, so far as the law is concerned, in the somewhat ancient remark that if dissenters suffer hardships "it is the fault not of the law but of their religion." Even today such an opinion is as solemnly accepted in some American States as it was years ago.

Still a third factor is the belief, held even by many lawyers, that the religious qualification is indispensable because it actually promotes truthful testimony. Thus one may argue with Professor Helwig that "beyond question, the judicial oath has been in the main an effective guardian of the truth."

In support of this doctrine a number of instances may be cited in which witnesses, upon being reminded of their oath or being resworn, have materially altered their testimony. "Yes, you have told us this, and said thus and so. Now Mr. Witness, will you swear to it?" Sometimes he won't. But if the religious oath has been "in the main" an effective guardian of the truth it is only because most Americans are believers, and to a believer a religious oath is the strongest guarantee of the truth.

From this it hardly follows, however, that the non-believer lacks standards to hold him just as strongly to the truth. It would be very hard, indeed, to prove that because an oath is binding upon a believer, another sort of pledge is not equally binding upon a non-believer. Pledges other than oaths, but just as binding, have long been common. For instance, Juliet's "Swear by thy gracious self." She asked a pledge, but she did not find it necessary to exact a religious oath. Likewise, "the word of honor of a gentleman", "Auf Ehrenwort", "Parole d'honneur" and for lawyers "voir dire" have long had the power to bind those to whom these expressions are significant. For that matter, it is

possible to find in the Bible itself good precedent for discarding all pledges: "He shall not profane his word, according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth, shall he do" (Numbers xxx, 2), reproduced in "Swear not at all" (Matthew v, 34). It was Jeremy Bentham who used this last quotation as a text for the introduction to his epoch-making "Rationale of Evidence" and it was in this book that he offered that devastating definition of an oath which was to have so profound an effect upon English law:

An oath is a ceremony by means of which the Almighty is engaged eventually to inflict on the taker of the oath or the swearer, punishment in quantity or quality, liquidated or more commonly unliquidated, in the event of his doing something which, he the swearer, at the same time and thereby, engages not to do; or omitting to do something, which he in a like manner engaged to do.

That essay it was which paved the way in England, despite the existence of the Established Church, for dispensing with oaths in the Excise and Customs departments (1835) and for the broad and liberal Oaths Act of 1833, reënacted in 1888, which allows an affirmation to non-conformists and unbelievers, who decline to take an affidavit. Here we encounter the curious paradox that in England, from which we got our Common Law, the courts are far more liberal about the competence of witnesses than they are in the United States, where the principle of the separation of Church and State is given lip-service, but is frequently ignored in practice.

IV

Just what hope there is for a saner treatment of this matter in our law it is not easy to say. The law moves slowly enough in much less controversial reforms than this. Yet one avenue for effecting the change lies open: It is through civil actions, for here we find that such capricious and irrelevant tests, barring the testimony of unbelievers, are not merely a denial of justice, but a deprivation of property in conflict with the Fourteenth Amendment.

In New Jersey law, as I have already pointed out, it is pretty well proved, by appeal to the Fourteenth Amendment, that a witness cannot be denied the privilege of testifying in his own behalf, regardless of his religious opinions. But the Amendment can be made to apply more broadly than this. Consider, for instance, the testimony of scientific experts in civil cases: can the testimony of such obviously qualified witnesses be denied on religious grounds, when the property interests involved in the case hang, perhaps, on their testimony? To exclude such testimony would be a plain denial of the rights of the litigant whether he be plaintiff or defendant.

Cases are bound to arise, civil actions involving intricate questions of property and large amounts of money, in which the refusal to receive such testimony will involve actual money losses to big interests. Then we shall see a speedy reform. Then, perhaps, we shall find the way opened to that more reasonable doctrine of Matthew: "Swear not at all".

ON BEING A QUAKER

BY EUGENE PHARO

AT THE age of six I was climbing a gentle hill on my way to the Friends' school in a small New Jersey town, when I heard a mocking voice. The son of a doctor who lived at the corner, and who considered himself superior because he wasn't a Quaker, didn't have to go to a Quaker school, and in other ways had an easier time of it than I, was leaning out a second-story window. He chanted at me:

Quaker, Quaker, mashed pertater,
Wiped himself on a piece of brown paper;
The paper was thin, his finger slipped in—
Oh! What a mess that Quaker was in!

I gathered that he didn't like Quakers, but my sense of self-sufficiency, of being one of the elect, was not seriously disturbed. He was bound to be rough, coarse, common, and a little frightening, for he was one of the rude fellows who went to the public school.

How fearsome and overbearing these public school boys were, born among worldly and pernicious influences, and educated without benefit of the True Faith, was illustrated one Winter day soon after, when there had been a heavy fall of snow. When we smaller children were let out for the noon recess, we came into the yard to find the air full of closely packed snowballs. A delegation had come from the public school to find living targets for their skill. No one was hurt, but the raid impressed itself on my tender mind with about the same effect that an incursion of

Goths and Vandals would have had upon a Roman toddler.

Not long after this my family moved to a non-Quaker environment, and until I was fifteen I heard little about the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, from which my parents had withdrawn, although the forbears of both for eight generations had been Quakers. But at the age of fifteen I was back among Friendly influences, at a Quaker boarding-school in Chester county, Pennsylvania, and later at a Quaker college near Philadelphia, and I spent much of the time in between in the home of a Friends' minister.

By the time my schooling was over, and I entered newspaper work, I was, I believe, a fairly convinced and sincere Quaker, although later on one thing and another gradually changed my ideas. At present my point of view is informed and objective enough to embolden me to write down a few Friendly observations, hoping that the result will be as nearly intelligible as can be achieved by a born Quaker, writing about so impalpable a thing as Quakerism.

Dates, of course, have some bearing. The World War was in progress at the time I got out of school, and there has been a still younger generation of Friends in training since then, who have been given the benefit of a slightly more liberal education than I received. At the Chester county school so-called classical plays are

now given by the pupils, at least occasionally, and the study of music and art has been initiated since I left in 1911. But I have been out there lately, and found that athletics (the chief hobby of the Friends), eating (their chief vice), and mysticism still have just as much pre-eminence as they had in my time. The seeds of Art that are being sown are very carefully selected, so that nothing noxious shall sprout from them.

In the Society at large there has grown up a somewhat freer attitude. Orthodox members of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting now find it possible to sit in conference with the schismatic followers of Elias Hicks without having their flesh crawl. (Elias presumed to doubt the unique divinity of Jesus, in 1828 or thereabouts.) Furthermore, most Friends find it possible today to look upon a commander-in-chief of the United State Army and Navy as actually a Friend. But under and through the impulses of the iconoclastic generation which now helps to determine the spirit of the Society there still flow such Quaker influences as those to which I was subjected.

It is possible that I shall fail utterly in my attempt to describe them. Friends often have trouble to understand one another. The Philadelphia brethren, for instance, can't understand why those in Indiana and Ohio can be so untrue to themselves and the Inner Light as to have hired preachers, and even to sing hymns with musical accompaniment in their meetings. The New England Friends can't understand why the Philadelphia Friends look upon it as a breach of faith for a minister to go to meeting planning deliberately to preach, and even knowing in a general way what he is going to talk about. In its purity, and as practiced by the more conscientious, old-fashioned

Friends, the belief is that if the Lord has something to say to a meeting He will move the person chosen to say it, and supply him with the words.

As with most mystical cults, there is something about Quakerism that leads to a frequent unintelligibility. The comprehension of even the best trained Friends is strained now and then, and leads them to doze off in meeting. This mystification is naturally most complete when the observer is a Roman Catholic, a Baptist, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, or a newspaper reporter. Probably those who would come nearest to understanding the Friends' type of prophecy would be learned followers of Moses.

This obscurity was first graphically brought to my attention when I was at college, and writing sports stories for the Philadelphia newspapers. In the Spring the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) convenes to transact business for the approximately 4,000 members in Pennsylvania and nearby New Jersey and Delaware. Several times the Philadelphia newspapers had sent staff men to these meetings, but none of them had succeeded in making out correctly what was going on. No votes are taken. There is no formal debate. Each person speaks as the Spirit moves him, and the clerk of the meeting depends upon his judgment and intuition for gathering the sense of the meeting. This is cast into the form of a minute and read. For several years I served as interpreter to the press, at column rates, and since then each year some young Friend of more or less worldly experience has been delegated by the meeting to make sure that the press understands approximately what it is all about. I refer here, of course, to business meetings, and not to meetings for worship.

II

This digression has been induced by memories of my first day at a Quaker boarding-school. There was a teacher who was also new to the institution that year. I had noticed differences in his form of speech from those to which I was used, and I asked him exactly how to address the teachers. He said that Mister So-and-so would be all right, or Miss. I used the plural pronoun in talking to him, and without rebuke. It is still a question with me whether he was exercising his humor, or had been associating elsewhere with the worldly. At any rate, I found his advice all wrong when I went to the library at the middle of the building—between the Girls' End and the Boys' End—and tried them out.

The librarian was a very sober, straight-mouthed person. (All the faculty, indeed, were straight-mouthed, and all the portraits on the walls were of straight-mouthed persons who apparently had never smiled.) Nevertheless, she was the first woman I had ever seen who wore bobbed hair. It hung, not in ringlets, but in wavelets. Before her awesome presence I committed three misdemeanors in one sentence, each of which, a few days later, would have been enough to set me down for long minutes in the collection room, to write over and over some moral sentence.

"Miss Ward," I asked, "can you tell me whether 'The Tale of Two Cities' is in the library?"

"*Thee* should call me Teacher Mary," answered this stern, portraitic personality, "and we have no *fiction* in the library."

She should have said *romantic* fiction. For it was there that I ran across Dante's "Inferno," and it was Master Davis, the

new teacher I have mentioned, who helped me round out the periods of the commencement essay that I wrote about Dante three years later.

But I didn't discover Dante that day. Instead, I withdrew as quickly as I could. My next memory is of being on the cricket field, trying to play a game of which I had never heard, and my next is of facing a dining-room filled with 200 pupils, half of them girls, with the rosiest cheeks, the most rugged bodies, and, in the main, the plainest faces I had ever seen. The girls sat on one side of tables made for eight or ten persons, and the boys on the other.

Each month the groups at all tables in the dining-room were broken up, and new opposites faced one another. This was for the purpose of weeding out attachments, and to promote a naturalness in the intercourse of the sexes, intended to eliminate as far as possible all consciousness of sex. Providence had helped out this programme by seeing to a general absence of feminine allure in most of the girl pupils, and the constant emphasis on holiness pretty well completed the job.

All adolescents have dreams, of course, but this school had only one advantage over a monastery or a convent: the constant presence of reality kept the dreams from becoming exaggerated. While many pupils in later years married among their schoolmates, it is still difficult for me to believe that, when babies resulted, they were not really brought by the stork, or plucked from rose bushes.

Every month or so there were sociables, at which charades and other such games were played, including those that afforded the brighter pupils a pleasant opportunity to air their erudition. But no real conversation between the sexes was possible. Gazing after any person of the opposite

sex who had aroused a fancy, as the long lines passed down a central hall from class to class, or, in class, studying the back of some one's neck, completed the extent to which contact was possible, except in the last year or two, when joint camp-suppers, under very strict surveillance, out in the jolly and smoky old greenwood, were sometimes arranged.

The remoteness combined with proximity that was thus produced continued automatically in after years. Women have an equal voice with men, if not equal weight, in the affairs of the Society. Quaker principles are against bedizening the person, and so one doesn't become very keenly conscious of sex. There is simply a faintly aromatic feminine presence, which often leads the more sensitive and imaginative of the young men, I'm afraid, to be keen to marry "out of meeting." A good many of them do, with a depressing effect upon the membership. Some of the more devout and intelligent never marry at all.

Virgins are supposed to be rare these days, but if ever the supply really runs out, whether of male or of female, there is a remarkable reservoir, I am convinced, within the Society of Friends. Nor would I despair of finding them even among the married.

But to return to books, in which Quakers live more vividly than in bedrooms. There is a little fiction of the standard romantic school in the library now, so I am told. But it was classed with music, dancing, the theater, cards, gambling, red neckties and bright socks, profanity and rouged women, as a hindrance to the spiritual life, when I and most of the present adult generation of Friends were being molded. It was in some Friends' homes, but only as pianos were, to the horror of others.

The differences in understanding between one Friend and another are, in fact, somewhat large. During the World War there were, for instance, Friends in the armed forces of the United States, others in the jails as conscientious objectors, and yet others on the American Friends' Service Committee, which devoted itself to the homeless and starving. None of these members was struck off the books of the Society, as in former years Friends had been struck off for such various infidelities as not paying their debts, marrying out of meeting, or conducting themselves in a disreputable manner by becoming soldiers.

The guess might be made that a decline in the primitive, proselyting zeal of the Friends into a jealous regard for the safety of a pretty well closed and prosperous Society has influenced this reluctance to decimate the ranks. The trend, in fact, is now the other way. The chief Friends' school nowadays—which has been regarded as a fountain head of the Faith since it was founded in 1799—no longer limits its tuition to children whose parents are both Friends, but is willing to admit a child either one of whose parents *has ever been* a Friend.

The form of address to which Teacher Mary called my attention—the so-called "plain language"—was adopted, in a more grammatical form than that used at present, in protest against the pomp, circumstance, and inequality of the middle Seventeenth Century, when the sect was born, with the leather-breeched George Fox as its first prophet and a horde of melancholic peasants, small tradesmen and craftsmen as its chief followers. It was one way of asserting the equality of all men under a common Father. Today it is little more than a shibboleth. In the town where I live, which contains a heavy

proportion of Quakers, it is occasionally used even by those not Friends, for the social cachet that, in that particular locality, it still appears to give. Among Friends, a generation or two ago, the common pronoun was sometimes used as a delicate form of cuss word, at least among little girls. "Thee little *you*, thee," for instance.

I have heard the plain language used on the soccer field (English games were familiar to me at both school and college) in a peculiar conjunction, at least to Friendly ears. One of the backs on the Haverford team was a conscientious Friend, but an earnest football player. One day he got kicked in the head, which sadly made his anger rise, and he turned on his Philistine assailant. "God damn thee!" he yelled.

One of the teachers at the boarding-school was also a good soccer player, and he was once accidentally kicked in a delicate place by a visiting player.

"Jesus!" muttered the visitor, in involuntary sympathy.

Master Bacon looked up at him with a cow-like and forgiving gaze.

"No," he answered. "Only one of His humble servants."

Even today, *thee* and *thy* interlarded in conversation give me a feeling that the person talking must be very good and holy all seven days of the week. I have rarely heard *thou*; never, in fact, except at Yearly Meeting time, when some of the more primitively faithful and scrupulous Friends come in from the country districts, with their faded brown and black broadcloth coats with plain collars, their broad-brimmed hats, and their habit of scraping up all the crumbs around their place at table with a knife, and eating them, because of their conscientious scruples against waste.

The pronouns are part of the ritual of the plain language, but they are not all. The Biblical injunction to let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay also influences the Quakers' speech. Their struggle for the right to refrain from taking oaths is ancient history. And there are other refinements. I know one Friend who will never tell his friends goodbye, because that is a contraction of the phrase "God be with ye." His tag is "Fare thee well," or "Fare thee well for the night." Others are scrupulous about promising anything for the future without adding the proviso, "if nothing happens to prevent," or "unless Providence forbids."

III

All this conduces to a caution that has been very useful in trade. I have never known a Friend who was genuinely rash, just as I have never met one who was genuinely hungry. This scarcity of Friends who are either rash or hungry probably accounts for the general belief that there is no such thing as a poor one, and that it is as difficult to get the better of them in a bargain as it is to rook a son of Abraham. In support of this belief there is more than a grain of truth. Friends have always professed to look first after spiritual riches, and to let material things be taken care of by the Lord, but from the very first the Lord has done well by them. They have been mainly drawn, in fact, from among people who were naturally careful and diligent in the pursuit of their callings, and who had a right regard for the enduring things of life.

For generations all ostentation and virtually all expensive amusements were denied them, and what one generation accumulated was thus passed on fairly intact to the next. Compound interest helped a

great deal, and the responsibilities of the real estate and other property that accrued formed the best school for learning the intricacies of business. Strictness in meeting their own debts, which is enjoined by the Discipline, has led in more cases than one to requiring strictness of other persons in meeting theirs. This has added vastly to some of the landed estates among them, by the defaulted mortgage route.

All Friends, of course, have not followed the letter of the Discipline in all their affairs, although a great many have tried to. There may have been some niggling sharpnesses, but I know of no magnificent frauds; consequently, no fortunes sufficiently large to command international attention have resulted. But the richer Friends are very comfortably off, and most of the rest are at least well-to-do.

The few who are poor—and some really are—are taken care of by a carefully worked-out system. There are a number of banking, industrial, and other companies that are owned and conducted by Friends, and the children of those Quakers who have no great amount of this world's goods have as a rule found employment in them. The Provident Mutual Life Insurance Company of Philadelphia, for instance, has absorbed many of the graduates of the boarding-school I attended, not all of them conspicuous for brightness. The school itself provided plenty of scholarships. These were not based on the intelligence of the pupils, but on their "unity with Friends", and upon the necessities of their parents.

Among Friends of any age, who are regularly members of the Society, and who are willing to do their share toward helping themselves, there need not be any genuine poverty, for the organization of every local meeting provides a committee for dealing with the needs of "Friends in

necessitous circumstances." This is partly an evolution from the mutual help that was required at the time of the persecutions in England and America, and partly a logical carrying out of the dictates of the Christian religion. The Friends have sometimes helped others, but they have always taken care of their own.

The Friends' simple trust in God is not particularly related to material needs; it carries through all their affairs, and used to be virtually substituted for education, with the exception of training in the three R's, in the Bible, and in the lives and sufferings of the earlier Friends. Thus a contemporary of my father was warned against going to college (even though the college was founded by Friends) because college was thought to be equivalent to the first step towards Hell by the Quaker who sought to reason with him. God would inspire him with whatever information he needed for his soul's salvation, he was told. The professors, who looked sometimes even at the Bible with an inquiring and critical eye, would inspire him with just the reverse.

There was a faint echo of such an attitude even when I went to college, and though I did not discover it until later, the intellectual pabulum with which we were fed had been strained through a mesh of Quaker inhibitions. There were a number of philosophers with whose identity I became acquainted only after I had received my diploma and started upon my education.

But it is in meeting that the habit of dependence on God is found in its purity. It arises here from the one central point of Quaker doctrine that has remained unchanged among Friends everywhere, no matter what shadings of opinion on other subjects may exist in the various yearly meetings, in London, Philadelphia, New

York, Baltimore, New England, Indiana, California, Oregon, Japan, New Zealand, or elsewhere. It is the idea of the Inner Light, whose teaching caused the Friends, before they were called Quakers, to be known as the Children of Light.

This doctrine asserts that every person born into the world brings with him a spark of the Divine Nature, and that in cultivating it he is able to establish so direct a line of communication with the Deity that the Divine Spirit, or the Light of Christ, dwells in him increasingly, and in times of silent worship makes itself understood to him, or speaks from him. So fundamental is this doctrine that Friends have been accustomed to interpret even the Bible, or to "open the Scriptures," as they say, by the light of their own inner revelations.

Their religion, in fact, does not, in the last resort, depend upon the Bible, except as it brings to them information about Jesus and the Truth that He taught, which, about 1650, they succeeded in understanding and interpreting for the free salvation of the rest of Christendom . . . and even of the Turk, whom they tried to persuade to listen. The Scriptures, nevertheless, have always been studied diligently, and are held in the highest reverence, for, as with the Friends themselves, the doctrine of the Scriptural writers was founded upon direct, personal experience of the Godhead.

Their belief in a continuing revelation has been at the base of a good many of the troubles Friends have got themselves into. It is obviously related to their general reputation for stiff-neckedness or obstinacy. Two texts which I have heard repeated innumerable times among them express their general view. One is the Biblical assurance of Jesus that, "wherever two or three are gathered together in my

name, there am I in the midst of them." The other is the more secular epigram: "One, with God, is a majority."

An analysis of the psychic states that are natural to this type of belief is to be found in William James's "Varieties of Religious Experience," and I shall not attempt to follow out that inquiry. The present paper is intended to be only a lay report of ordinary experience. That experience was had as part of a course of training intended to open my eyes to the truth, and to confirm me in the practices of Quakerism. There were three important elements in the system. One included an hour every Fifth-day and another every First-day morning, at Quaker meeting. (Sunday is First-day, and the other days of the weeks are correspondingly numbered, in order to avoid using the pagan names with which the wordly are satisfied.) Another was a Quiet Hour for solitary contemplation every First-day afternoon. The third was instruction in the Quaker Catechism, prepared by Robert Barclay, with the usual ghostly collaboration, in the Seventeenth Century.

The Catechism was both memorized and discussed. The Quiet Hour was frequently used for naps. But Meeting was something else again. There is a palpitating and mysterious something that hangs over a room full of quiet persons, a good many of them with their minds on holy subjects, and a certain number of them perched on the edges of the wooden benches in mingled hope and fear that a still, small voice will be heard in their hearts, urging them to get up and speak. The very first experience of it, in adolescence, and with the mind keyed up by the strangeness, is beautiful and moving. The atmosphere of peace, of tranquillity, and goodness, is almost palpable. To the brooding, introspective temperament

there comes a feeling of exaltation, and of actual communion with God.

With this experience repeated in meeting time after time—though not always—an attitude is built up that is familiar to anyone who has ever come into contact with sincere and convinced Friends. Paradoxically, the attitude itself isn't always as lovely as the experiences that gave it birth. One sometimes fancies, in truth, that in a good many instances the worshipper has communed, with devoted intensity, only with himself and his personal preferences and prejudices.

At school the silence was not always broken. Every few weeks one of the male teachers, a diminutive fellow with a large head, staring, astigmatic eyes—and safely married—would rise to his feet, and in a high-pitched and very emotional voice reproach himself with being a sinner. He invariably ended with tears, and made you feel very uncomfortable. Or a girl pupil who had prayed hard for guidance would rise, and, after the rustling and stirring caused by curiosity had died down, would inform the assembled school in a faltering voice that God is love. But as a rule sermons of any length were delivered only by visiting Friends who had felt the prompting so frequently that the monthly meetings to which they belonged believed they could be counted upon, and had recorded them as ministers—without pay, of course.

At the meeting connected with college there were several members of the faculty in the two or three rows of benches that are raised above the floor, facing the meeting, and are known as the ministers' gallery. One of them, beside being a minister, was a writer on philosophy and mysticism. The Lord moved him to speak pretty regularly, and put into his mouth words of searching beauty. His ideas were

often compelling, and I, for one, found them comprehensible, because they were familiar to me from the lectures on philosophy that I heard during the week in his classroom, where scholarship instead of God was supposed to inspire them.

In other meetings, not connected with schools, I have heard a wealthy milk man, a life insurance executive, a grain broker, a chemical manufacturer, a former railroad president, a doctor, housewives, social workers, and all kinds of teachers, farmers, and others, deliver the word of the Lord. In each case the Lord made use of their usual vocabularies and experiences of life, of their individual emotions and every-day ideas, to compose the sermons they uttered. In some of these meetings, too, I have sat out an hour's silence in which my mind often wandered from the verities of my religion, and I could not fail to observe solid burghers dozing on the cushioned benches, while the fat cells all but stood out on their faces.

I have never spoken in meeting myself, or felt impelled to speak, although at times I have got pretty well exalted. One of my friends, who has since left meeting, told me once that he was sure on a First-day that he had had a prompting, but that he resisted yielding to it, and in consequence had a severe stomach-ache. I could imagine his disturbance, for I often speculated about such difficulties, and several times felt cold chills run up and down my spine at the suspicion that I was on the verge of being inspired. It would have been grievous to have been called upon to speak and to have refrained—through ignorance or cowardice. For the belief was that whether what you said meant anything to you, it was certain that there was somebody in the room for whom God intended the message that was intrusted to your keeping.

IV

I believe that I have stated the essentials of the Quaker position, leaving out of course many of the corollaries that grow from it. It has in many cases resulted among Friends in a very close imitation of Jesus. The travels and labors of some of the earlier Friends strike an objective student as almost impudent attempts to reenact the chief occasions of His career, up to and including the Crucifixion. The non-resistance to persecution that they practiced, and the comparative freedom of opinion that they exercised, resulted in the creation not only of martyrs, but also of personalities. By so close and intense a dependence upon the personal guidance of their Lord the value of the individual was greatly enhanced.

Some of the personalities that resulted were inspiring only to those who desired to live and act as they lived and acted. Others displayed a tolerance and sympathy for the world at large that were sufficient to charm anyone. John Woolman, the opponent of slavery who lived in Mt. Holly, N. J., and who is known through his Journal to many who have no other interest in Friends, was one. I know several today whose gentleness and knowledge, and a sort of faithful skepticism and tolerance have won every one with whom I have ever seen them in contact.

There are, it is true, a limited number of Friends who are known to the world for other things than their charming personalities, or their hard-bitten righteousness. They either have been identified with some reform, as was Elizabeth Fry with that of the prisons in England, or they have found themselves holding public office. William Penn is generally considered a fine example of the Friendly office-holder, and it was with unalloyed

enthusiasm that the Friends lately celebrated the 250th anniversary of his arrival at Philadelphia. His treaty with the Indians is known in every school room, and it is acknowledged to be redolent of Christian amity. It may have been equally characteristic that it turned out, as well, to be a very good bargain.

For about seventy years Penn and the Quakers who came after him had complete control of Pennsylvania, just as for five or six years the Friends governed Rhode Island. The question of war brought about the breakdown of their rule, and by the time the Revolution was in full swing the Pennsylvania Friends thought it wise to withdraw from public life. It has been only of recent years that, as Friends, they have found the way clear to return. Isaac Sharpless, the late president of Haverford College, wrote the history of Penn's "holy experiment" in government. He expressed in it the belief that the Quakers should have remained in public life and stood their ground.

One of the more active officers of the most conservative orthodox yearly meeting recently told me that he thought President Sharpless was right. This Friend was one of the most diligent, in an official capacity, in maintaining contact with Washington during the World War, where at least one Quaker, the Hicksite and graduate of Swarthmore, A. Mitchell Palmer, was Attorney General. After President Wilson decided, against the protests of Friends, and the vote of a large proportion of the country, to go into the war, the Society's chief efforts at Washington were devoted to safeguarding the freedom of conscience and abstinence from warfare for which Friends had always contended. Members of the Society were exempt from combatant service as a result, while Socialists and others

who ventured to oppose the war from a less spiritual point of view were roughly handled. The American Friends' Service Committee, which provided an inspiring and interesting sojourn abroad for many Friends who did not choose to fight, was considered adequate war service for a good many, and enabled their consciences and that of the Attorney General to be satisfied simultaneously.

I do not think anyone need ask what Mr. Palmer, who paradoxically exercised against war dissenters in general exactly the same brutal repression to which Friends were subjected in some of the colonies, would have done even to a Friend who had refused publicly to buy Liberty Bonds, or who followed the agitating example of his forbears and sought to dissuade others from buying them. All I know definitely is that one Friend—a naïve soul from up country—who got on to his feet at the yearly meeting of 1918 to urge such a protest, was immediately asked to sit down by one of the overseers or elders who decide whether the remarks of Friends in meeting are acceptable, and therefore truly inspired of God.

In recent times a number of so-called Friends have become prominently identified with the affairs of government. That their actions and reputations have not at all times been indicative of Quaker principles is explained by the fact that any child born of Quaker parents is *ipso facto* a Friend. This explains such anomalies as President Hoover, who prefers armored tanks to moral suasion in dealing with indigent ex-soldiers, and Mitchell Palmer, the Red-baiter. Until such men are definitely disowned, or decently resign, they remain legally Friends. The act of disownment has not been employed very frequently of late, nor is it likely to

be initiated against the President of the United States.

It isn't really necessary. Those who transmit the spirit of the Society and who size up from a religious point of view its various members, recognize very quickly who can honestly be endorsed as a Friend, and who should be spoken of with a slight hesitation, and a chilling lift of the eye-brows as a "so-called Friend," or as a member of the Society, but not . . . uh . . . well, not perhaps very *Friendly*.

Mr. Hoover, by Quaker standards, is not to be mentioned in the same breath with Charles J. Rhoads, former governor of the Federal Reserve Bank at Philadelphia and former clerk of Haverford Monthly Meeting, or J. Henry Scattergood, both of whom he has appointed Indian Commissioners. The latter two really practice their faith, and are among the weighty members of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. There are other Quakers who have been in the public eye, but who are never mentioned, except perhaps humorously, as actually being what they are labelled. General Smedley D. Butler, formerly of the Marine Corps, is one of them. Joe Grundy, the political boss, is another. The late William C. Sproul, a recent Governor of Pennsylvania, was a Hicksite Quaker who was highly respected. Some one with a penchant for out-of-the-way information may go so far as to mention the shadowy reflection of Quakerism that was cast by the late Uncle Joe Cannon, the iron-fisted Speaker of the House of Representatives.

But ordinarily the names of Friends who have been prominent in public life are not found on the lips of Quakers who take their own profession of faith seriously. I recently asked a couple of more than usually learned and influential

Friends how many such men they could think of. Each told me that if given a little time to dredge his memory, and to consult the books, he might summon up a dozen. Confronted with names like those of Palmer or Butler they whispered such adjectives as "terrible".

There is something much more admirable to the Quaker mind about a thorough-going and diligent Friend than there is about any other sort of person. It is taken for granted that anyone who is much in the world's eye has been much less than a scrupulous follower of the Quaker way of life. His distinction and his Friendliness are expected to be—the world being what it so lamentably is—in opposition to each other. Friends can not conceive of Jesus sitting in the seat of Pilate, urbane and civilized as the latter may have been; and their concern, as Friends, is to emulate Jesus.

I never learned at any Quaker school that Nathaniel Greene, the military genius of George Washington's staff, was a Quaker, or that Walt Whitman was the son of another. In my class in political

economy at college no mention was made of Joe Cannon's ever calling on the Lord to preserve his control of Congress. John Greenleaf Whittier was approved as a Friend because he promoted Friendly testimonies, such as that against slavery; but the rest I was left to find out for myself.

This tacit testimony to the futility of wordly distinction, consciously or unconsciously serves two purposes. It obscures the comparative scarcity of such distinction among members of the Society, and it confirms, by establishing a comparatively narrow category of virtues, the divine rightness of belief and action among the ordinary.

I don't hesitate to mention this superb rightness, for it can not be considered an attempt to draw invidious distinctions. I freely admit such stigmata in myself. A few years ago, as evidence, I presumed to resign from the Society, thus opinionatedly pitting my ego against every intimation of divinity that had been conveyed to me, by birth, and education, and through the free and almost untrammelled ministry of a manifestly Christian people.

AMERICANA

ARIZONA

FROM the want ad columns of the *Denver Post*:

I intend to make a first-class writer and a great President of United States. We have only had two great Presidents: George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. If I become President, I will make laws, work will be plentiful, money plentiful, marriage easy, living easy and other things seen to. Put United States going to Mars and other stars. Ralph Roosevelt Thomas, Route 1, Box 45, Temple Arizona.

COLORADO

ANOTHER want ad in the same paper:

O God send me the right woman to help in this work. 5187 Lowell. No. 28 car.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

FROM the Question Box of the *St. Francis Home Journal*, published by the Capuchin Fathers at Brookland:

Q. 455. Some time ago I cleaned the blessed candles in church and some of the wax went on the floor. I was working and every now and then I would step on the wax. I didn't mean to be disrespectful. I was in doubt whether it was a venial sin or mortal.

May a person with false teeth put in his teeth in the morning before Holy Communion or does he have to place his false teeth in the evening before?

Answer: 1) You committed no sin whatever by stepping on the wax. It is only the candle that is blessed; the drippings, since they no longer constitute a candle, are no longer blessed.

2) False teeth should be put in place in the morning.

ILLINOIS

CARD of a Moline wonder-worker:

MADAME MARY—SPECIAL READINGS

Hours, 9 A.M. to 8 P.M.

I promise to tell you whether your husband, wife or sweetheart is true or false, tell you how to gain the love of the one you most desire, even though miles away—in fact, tell you every hope, fear, or ambition better than you can tell yourself. I have helped others. Why not you? Tell what you call for. Tell whom and when you should marry. If you are in trouble of any kind, discontented, unhappy, or not satisfied in life, or domestic troubles, you will be told how to overcome them. Your wish and object in life can be attained.

MADAME MARY

Sunday Readings

Upstairs at 2319 5th ave. Moline, Illinois

Hours: 9 A.M. to 8 P.M.

IOWA

Gossip in the *Progress Review*, the pride of La Porte City:

A current rumor is being circulated that a new ordinance is soon to be passed in La Porte City and will include a curfew clause. Furthermore, this curfew will be different from the usual interpretation in that there will be no age limit placed on the people affected by it. Instead of chasing home at nine o'clock, boys and girls under a certain age, it will specify that sitting on the street and visiting until the small hours of the night shall be considered a misdemeanor. And where the visiting includes telling stories that are not of the parlor type, an extra fine may be assessed.

INCIDENT in the life of the free citizens of Lineville, as reported by the *Tribune* thereof:

When the fire whistle blew the bank robber signal Tuesday forenoon, citizens turned out with everything from sawed off shotguns to tin buckets and fire extinguishers. After some twenty cars had circled the public square several times at speeds varying from ten miles an hour made by the Ford roadster of Joe Duncan, *Tribune* foreman, to sixty miles an hour made by John Krieder, fire chief, the blaze was finally located at the Jim Branhams home on West Hill, and led by Frank McIntosh in the ice truck with Chief Krieder close behind honking loudly for gangway the procession started down West 3rd street. When the chief's car finally landed in a ditch John finished the run on foot, beating the ice truck by a neck. Arriving at the scene of the conflagration the fire was located in a back bedroom where a bed mattress was burning slowly but surely. The fire was put out and the department dispersed to their several homes.

P. S.—The alarm was turned in from the Bob Molleston home on the Hill, where it is said it is the only telephone in that part of town, and a sort of community convenience.

FROM the celebrated Boone *News-Republican*:

OUR MODERN CHAPEL

A SOLUTION TO THE
OVER-CROWDED HOME
JONES FUNERAL
HOME

823 ARDEN ST.

PHONE 275R1

KANSAS

INCIDENT of domestic life in Kansas City:

Charles Bramble, haled into court to tell why he locked his wife out of the house, said the ghost of his wife's first husband was to blame. Bramble didn't object, he said, when the ghost told his wife how to run her affairs. But when the ghost sent

directions as to how Bramble should conduct his business, Bramble got tired of it.

POLITICAL advertisement in the McPherson *Daily Republican*:

Hugh McClain, candidate for County Commissioner, is a young man, forty-two years old. A very bright young man, was born on a farm in Harper township and continually lived on a farm, and like most of us farmers has been up against it very hard, has fed cattle and hogs, and you all know what that has done to the farmers, but I want to say he has been honest and trying to make things go, but you all know that the man that has tried the hardest has been the biggest loser, you might say he has lost, that is so, but who hasn't? I can very frankly say that I think Hugh McClain will make a first class commissioner, his business experiences in the past will make him all the more careful in the future. I want to take this opportunity of recommending Hugh McClain as what I think the proper man for the Democrats of McPherson county to vote for as their candidate, and you will make no mistake, and I will guarantee you that he will try to help run things right and keep expenses down.

A FRIEND

MARYLAND

THE Easton *Star-Democrat* discovers a new world's champion:

W. P. Chaffinch is wearing a very fine pair of Irish linen trousers. He bought the material for them from Thompson & Kersey just fifty-two years ago, and he has not missed a single Summer in all that time wearing them. They look today as fine as a new pair, and in fact but for his statement concerning their age they would be taken for new. Mr. Chaffinch undoubtedly has broken the record in trouser wearing in the entire country.

MISSOURI

CARD of thanks in the *De Kalb County Record-Journal*, published at Maysville:

I want to thank the friends who so loyally stood by me during the recent primary. I had very few relatives and no political

pull. If I am to blame for anyone having a big family I am perfectly willing to help support them.

(signed)

JOHN COLLYER.

OHIO

THE State University goes in for culture in the grand manner, and the Columbus *Citizen* hastens to let its readers know about it:

A concert of real hound dog music will be broadcast over WEAO, the Ohio State University Station, Friday at 10 P.M. through the Bureau of Education of the State Division of Conservation. A pack of coon hounds and a real live coon will play their part in the broadcast studio.

PENNSYLVANIA

THE Johnstown *Tribune's* Shamokin correspondent adds another to the ever-growing list of world's champions:

Dr. George Reese, Sr., chief surgeon of Shamokin State Hospital, has completed his 15,000th tonsil and adenoid operation here without a fatality. The record covers a period of twenty-one years and includes patients from an area sixty miles in radius. Within three months last year Dr. Reese operated on 1,400 patients for the removal of tonsil and adenoid growths. In June of this year he performed 433 such operations and in a single day operated on 78.

TENNESSEE

INTELLECTUAL recreations of the he-men of Nashville, as recorded for posterity by the *Banner* thereof:

A search for the man with the ugliest, longest, biggest, shortest nose in the Shrine Club membership ended shortly after noon today at the conclusion of a nose-measuring contest which featured the weekly luncheon meeting in the Andrew Jackson Hotel.

The Rev. Prentice A. Pugh, rector of the Church of the Advent, won first place; second place went to Judge Charles C. Gilbert, and third place was won by Barney Rittenberg. T. A. Springfield was in charge of the contest.

SAD statistics from the Executive Board of the State Baptist Convention:

Q. How many unsaved people in Tennessee?

A. Dr. Aldredge reports for this year 1,263,771 ten years old and upward without Christ.

TEXAS

THE spiritual life at the First Baptist Church of Fort Worth, of which the eminent Rev. Dr. J. Frank Norris is high priest:

11:00 A.M., Dr. Norris preaches on how to beat both the Sanhedrin and the Devil.

8:00 P.M., before the sermon, all the candidates in the run-off will be presented by the Hon. B. F. Bouldin. A Jersey cow and Toggenberg goat, both registered, have been donated to the building fund of the new auditorium—the former by Mr. J. B. Pittenger and the latter by Mrs. Jean Lipps. Two of the candidates present Sunday night will milk the cow and the goat.

WEST VIRGINIA

REPLY of the Hon. W. S. Johnson, treasurer of this great State, to a resolution of the Legislature asking him how many of his relatives were on his payroll:

I have before me a copy of the House resolution requesting information as to the employment of my relatives in this department.

In reply, I beg to inform the House of Delegates that during the many years I have served as State Treasurer I have not had on my payroll father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, great grandfather, great grandmother, brother, half brother, brother-in-law, sister, half sister, sister-in-law, uncle, great uncle, aunt, great aunt, first cousin or second cousin, by blood or marriage.

I take it from your resolution that you are interested regarding the personnel of my employes, and I gladly submit the following information:

None of my female employes smoke, chew gum or tobacco. They do not use snuff. They have bobbed hair and occa-

sionally use a little paint and powder on special dress-up occasions. They wear dresses of the length prescribed by society, and shoes which in my opinion are considerably smaller than their feet. All of them wear stockings.

The male employés are just the usual, ordinary type of West Virginia mountaineers, who have trained and qualified themselves for work such as is required in this department. They all wear socks, shoes and long pants. None of them wear long beards as this is prohibited in this department. Some of them smoke, but none of them are addicted to snuff, liquor, gum or golf.

All of my employés are church members and attend Sunday-school. None of my female employés have husbands, but I am not advised as to their matrimonial intentions. I have two single male employés, but I understand they are already spoken for. None of my employés are not only not related to me but are not related to each other. My employés come from different parts of the State, and are all of the Anglo-Saxon stock and revolutionary ancestry. Every member of this department is a Republican in good standing. If I should be succeeded as Treasurer by a Democrat, each one of my employés would be supplanted by a deserving Democrat.

W. S. JOHNSON, *Treasurer*.

WISCONSIN

ROMANTIC tale from the great city of Milwaukee, as related by a reader of the *Journal* thereof:

Here is a true story I know in which the Edgar Guest poems played a part in the search for happiness.

Two sweethearts read poetry together and Edgar Guest's poems held a special niche in their hearts. When the young man left town to attend the university he asked the girl to clip the Guest poems from the *Journal* and send them to him in her letters, as that would make him feel they were still reading that little poem together each evening.

The young man's records at the university were remarkable until he became interested in the so-called "educated" writers—our radicals. Slowly his good thinking was undermined. Whereas before he had believed in God and had got a thrill out of the simple things of life, now he couldn't get a kick out of anything. Life went stale on him and naturally he started on the down grade. There were always those around who were willing to help him down. He got mixed up with bootleggers and women and was put out of the university.

After finding out a lot of things and being disillusioned he again wrote to his former sweetheart (who had believed in him all this while) and he sent her an Edgar Guest poem to let her know that he had learned that only the simple things really count. He asked her to forgive and said he would strive to earn her respect again. He wasn't coming back until he did. And in closing he said: "If you cannot forgive me now, won't you just please send me an Edgar Guest poem as you used to do?"

Needless to say, the girl is again sending the poems daily. A. W. B.
N. Twenty-ninth st., Milwaukee.

IN PARTIBUS INFIDELIUM

THE power of the Holy Spirit in Spain, as revealed by the *Catholic Press* of Sydney, Australia:

The London *Tablet*, which does not publish sensational yarns, has the following report in its issue of May 27: Not for the first time recently has sudden death followed irreligious acts. A well-known Communist in the village of Fuentelapena, Spain, had sworn to fire five shots into the image of the Christ of Mexico on its return to its shrine after the end of the Ascension novena. Accordingly, last Sunday night, neighbors went to the house of the Communist to remind him that on the following day he was to carry out his boast. He was found dead, with no sign of violence or disease.

OFFICERS AND GENTLEMEN

BY HOFFMAN NICKERSON

THE commissioned officers of the United States Regular Army number only 12,000, and the near future will probably see them reduced to 10,000. Their pay is low. The base pay of a major-general, the highest grade now on active service, is only \$8,000 a year, and his allowances for long service, etc., cannot raise it more than another \$1700. The men of the lowest commissioned rank, that of second lieutenant, get only \$1500 a year during their first five years in that grade, with a possible maximum of less than \$700 in allowances. Further, the Officers Corps as a whole is little known, many of its members live in remote posts, they are continually being moved about, and a close tie of professional comradeship holds them together in a narrow world of their own. Nevertheless, this small, ill-paid, and isolated group is important to every man, woman and child in the United States, for in an emergency the profession of arms is the most important of all professional groups. So it has always been and so it will be again.

But, the mob-minded may say, why make any fuss about the officer? Isn't it the enlisted man, and most of all the humble private, who really does the work? Indeed, he does do most of the hand labor, and if he should fall below a certain physical, mental and spiritual level then the best Officers Corps in the world would be as helpless as a carpenter whose tools were constantly breaking in his hand. But un-

fortunately for the radical democrat, the artist and the artisan are more important than their tools. Human mediocrity being what it is, leaders are more important than the led. A good old proverb which has stood the test of time was given its final form by a certain sallow, fiery little Corsican when he said, "Better an army of lambs led by a lion than an army of lions led by a lamb."

Again, the rank and file of professional armies such as our regulars are always recruited from the cheapest available human material—cheapest, that is, in terms of money—whereas the officers, as we shall see presently, are not so recruited. Finally, for good or ill, there is a strong similarity of professional type between the regular enlisted man and his officer; the first is the product of the second. Good officers have been known to get results from most unpromising material. Given time, they can usually make good soldiers out of almost any group of white men and out of many brown, yellow, red or black men. So much for the mob-minded.

About 35% of the American officers are West Pointers, about 30% are ex-rankers, and the remaining 35% are appointed from civil life. The writer used to believe that the West Pointers were a little clanish, but has heard this so resolutely denied by officer friends of the remaining 65% that he has given up the idea. Certainly the 65% are not barred from advancement: Major-General Preston Brown,

who now commands the Panama Canal Zone, is a Yale graduate, and Colonel A. L. Conger, now retired after serving as Pershing's Sub-Chief of Intelligence during the late war, threw up a job as organist of Grace Church, New York, to enlist for the Spanish War.

Nevertheless, the cohesive body of West Pointers sets the tone. On the whole, this is probably for the best, for the West Pointer has been formed by four years of a discipline far stricter than that which could be imposed either in civil life or upon enlisted men anywhere. Nowadays discipline is unfashionable; many modern theories of education reduce it to a vanishing point. All of us have in us some touch of the anarchist, and to submit cheerfully and continuously to orders requires a real effort of the will. Moreover, discipline must necessarily be harsh to those who rebel. But all the same it is necessary for the uncomfortable and dangerous business of war. And in the West Pointers it is almost always accompanied by loyalty.

For that matter, loyalty is pretty well distributed throughout the whole Regular Officers Corps. Once in a long while, during 1918, one would see an officer neatly knife another because of something that had happened fifteen years before in the Philippines or thereabouts—on the enlisted man's level such an incident was given in "What Price Glory"—but such instances were rare.

II

A poet would find something appropriate to a military school in the surroundings of West Point, with their harsh great knobs of rock towering above the fine sweep of the Hudson. An historian might add that it was the one post essential to the American cause during the miserable,

dragged-out years that ended the Revolution. From 1778 until after Yorktown, Washington often spoke of his army as "a garrison for West Point", for while that strong padlock barred the middle Hudson to the British no strategic reconquest of the body of the rebellion was possible.

To give its graduates due praise for discipline and loyalty is by no means to say that its system is flawless. The men it turns out are sometimes accused of narrowness, and it is true that until recent years, while inoculating them against the sloppy indiscipline characteristic of so much of American life, it restricted their liberty after a somewhat childish fashion. This, however, is now on the mend. Perhaps the chief vice of the Point is more subtle and harder to cure: until recently its professors were invariably chosen from among its own graduates—a process of inbreeding which would have stunted the intellectual life of even a great university. Even today only 8% are non-graduates. Perhaps it might be wise for the government to insist upon a certain proportion of non-graduates among the officers of its faculty; perhaps even an occasional civilian professor among the teachers of languages might enlarge the minds of his pupils by giving them a sniff of the humanities. Nevertheless, the writer, even were he dictator—which may God forbid in mercy to all concerned!—would not press this point too far. After all, the West Point product has been by no means unsatisfactory.

Most of the other charges against the institution are easily refuted. Where they are true, not so much the Point as American life in general is to blame. If the grey-coated automata drilling on its parade grounds receive from their inbred faculty an education a little too exclusively technical, a little lacking in breadth, do not most of our colleges make the same mis-

take and with less excuse? If French and British officers begin their professional training with a solid liberal education than that of most of our cadets, the fault is national and not professional. If the elaborate West Point etiquette book is a fair target for irreverent fun, is not social climbing notoriously and almost universally American?

Taking the writer's personal experience for what it is worth, the officers who have risen from the ranks seem to be among the best and the worst. One under whom I served remains my ideal of a company officer. Another, by no means altogether lacking in ability, was prone to go off half cocked and blissfully unaware of his own ignorance. When he lectured, the results were sometimes funnier than he intended. It is not necessary to tell officer candidates much about military history, but if you do then it is desirable to give them something not altogether divorced from truth. With his own ears the writer heard this individual say in a lecture that the Prussians had won in 1870 because they had put their money into railroads whereas the French had put theirs into fortresses. Months afterward, the head of the A. E. F. Historical Section remarked that it would have been difficult to cram more errors into a short sentence; the only true statement was that the Prussians had won.

The civil appointees have no such definite background as the West Pointers and ex-rankers. Among the best of them one finds an occasional college graduate who is willing to enter the service a little older than the Pointers, and therefore to remain permanently junior in rank to men younger than himself; or an officer's son who has absorbed a knowledge of the profession from boyhood without developing the mathematical skill necessary to graduate from or even enter the Point.

III

What makes men want to be officers? The Army offers an active outdoor life, travel, and a modest financial security. Short of death or dismissal from the service, you can go on if you like until the 64-year age limit automatically retires you on three quarters of your pay as of your day of retirement; or if you prefer you can retire at sixty-two, or at the discretion of the President you can retire when you like after you have served thirty years.

The traditional prestige of the profession of arms counts for something. From the beginning of history until a few generations ago, soldiers governed most of mankind; rulers, even when most unmilitary in temper, were supposed to be men of the sword. When you wanted to compliment a gentleman of the Renaissance you called him a scholar and a soldier. This military tradition is not entirely lost among the European gentry even today. In a recent French book about North Africa, an apparently peaceable professor in the University in Algiers writes of the chief medieval Moslem historian of that country: "Ibn Khaldoun was too much of a gentleman not to be something of a soldier." Nor was the older United States completely without that spirit. When a certain Ogden Hoffman resigned from the Navy in 1816 to practice law in his native New York, his commander, Decatur, said that it was a pity that he should have "exchanged an honorable profession for that of a lawyer!"

It is true that the soldier has never been without enemies. The barbarian of every land and time has hated and hates him because he is authority in person; indeed such hatred is of the essence of the barbarian. The trader distrusts him because the soldier must despise the softness and

comfort which trade exists to serve. Nor has he been without real professional faults; at his worst he was a boaster and bully. The third chapter of St. Luke's Gospel has the repentant soldiers who came to St. John the Baptist asking what they should do to be saved receive from the Saint the answer: "Do violence to no man . . . and be content with your wages": they must have had the regrettable habit of rough-housing the civil population.

A glance at the dictionary reveals an astonishing variety of base meanings for the word soldier. It does not seem a compliment to the profession that the red herring is so called, although the red coat of the old British army is doubtless responsible. The soldier ant is said to be a less effective fighter than the worker ant. But worse is to come. Veterinarians make of soldier a term for the hog cholera, and the wool trade so calls "a sheep skin that sweats unevenly, so that only part of the wool can be pulled off." Sailors and others speak of soldiering as shirking or making a pretense of work. To soldier also has the meaning of to swagger or to bully.

But never can the multitude of his enemies altogether prevail against the soldier, for while man is man civic order disappears if not maintained in arms. The irreducible minimum of soldiering is emergency police work. Further, the instinct to honor the soldier is rationally and permanently human; you will never convince either mankind or womankind that it is despicable to risk one's skin. For his part, the writer is prepared to go much further. Although never in danger from the enemy except for a trip through the submarine zone and a few air raids, he had no desire in 1919 to stay in the Army, and joyfully declared a personal military holiday which has lasted ever since. Nevertheless, he is prepared to maintain under persecution

that the man who hates or despises the soldier only reveals the baseness of his own shrivelled soul.

At all events, the instinctive and traditional admiration for soldiers shows no sign of decay. Plenty of young Americans want to be officers. And the Officers Corps sets for them a high standard both of manners and of conduct. A little experience of Army life will convince anyone that the Service is among the remaining strongholds of good manners. Most of us have met not a few vulgar male and female louts not fit to black the boots of plenty of Army men and women without a tenth of the aforesaid louts' incomes. And where in contemporary civil life will you find a profession in which a man can be fired from his job "for conduct unbecoming a gentleman"?

That the education of our officers should be a little less mathematical and technical, a little more given to broad analysis, would seem proved by the National Defense Act. The experience of the war was two-fold; in the first place it continued the immense conscript masses brought into the modern world by the French Revolution and Napoleon. At the same time it robbed those masses of offensive power, condemning them to a trench stalemate decisive only through bankruptcy and famine. On the other hand, it proved the power both of machine-guns and of other new weapons: if the machine-gun had proved stronger in defense than the unarmored infantry rifle-men, so had the tank and to some extent the airplane proved their offensive power. The National Defense Act shows all too well what the American Officers Corps made of these lessons.

The leading idea of the act is to provide a gigantic—and somewhat flimsy—skeleton for a still more gigantic conscript Army which does not exist and has no rea-

sonable chance of ever existing. Even assuming that future conditions will favor a conscript Army, we must use such a mass either to resist invasion or to invade others. With Canada, Mexico, the oceans and the Navy as they are, only a naval and military coalition of enormous strength could invade us. No such coalition exists and to organize one would be a difficult and lengthy job. As for invading others, the reader may judge for himself what the chances are of the United States within this generation again conscripting millions of men for overseas service.

Meanwhile, the skeleton is brittle because Americans remain opposed to peacetime conscription, and bones dry up when left without flesh to cover them. For want of soldiers, only 7% of our 365 colonels and lieutenant colonels of infantry on active service, and less than 3% of our 1081 majors, can hope to command a suitable number of enlisted men at manoeuvres. The same lack of soldiers makes it impossible to give experience in troop leading to more than a handful of our horde of 119,000 reserve officers. Granted that book study, staff work, map problems, and field exercises without troops have their value, still troop leading remains the proper work of the line officers who constitute the great majority of a properly organized Officers Corps, and without a due proportion of it most of them will be officers only in name.

What is true of organization under the National Defense Act is also true of armament. Thinking only of the Western Front in the late unpleasantness, our higher command has loaded up the infantryman since the war with miscellaneous trench weapons until the unfortunate doughboy is not unlike a land turtle or a Christmas tree. And this although the geographical and other circumstances which make up our national strategy, particularly our lesser

density of population as compared with Central and Western Europe, make it most improbable that our soldiers will ever have to meet conditions like those of the aforesaid Western Front. Although our great distances cry aloud for a highly mobile, mechanized Army and our automobile industry leads the world, the ground forces of every great Power except disarmed Germany have surpassed ours in supplementing man-power with machine-power.

It goes without saying that plenty of intelligent regulars are well aware of the foregoing truths. A private letter from one highly competent officer says: "It is a public service to cry aloud on all possible occasions against the official doctrine that the national defense and the National Defense Act are synonymous. Actually, I feel that they are almost antithetic; but one bearing the President's commission cannot say so publicly. If we don't get rid of the present law, evolution is stopped."

IV

Once the principle of the National Defense Act is recognized as unsound and unsuited to our national needs, the remedy is not far to seek. As to organization, we can and should strengthen, and especially balance, our military nucleus of Regulars and National Guard. This can be done by drastically reducing our top-heavy Regular Officers Corps and Reserve Corps. Chairman Ross Collins, of the Military Affairs Committee of the House, has proposed a reduction of 2000 regular officers, and Mr. La Guardia of New York—in one of his intervals of wisdom—has sensibly suggested abolishing the pay of reserve officers while training.

As to equipment, put trench weapons (grenades, rifle grenades, trench mortars,

and heavy howitzers) down in their place, and the new fast tanks up in theirs. Next, recognize that machine-guns and automatic rifles eat up ammunition so fast that mechanical transport in the shape of trucks or fast tractors will be required for the infantry who will constitute the defensive component of future armies and must act as moppers-up after a tank advance. As to distribution, the remedy is obvious but politically difficult to apply: it is that of giving up all useless posts and concentrating the troops in a few large posts. The reluctance of Congress to permit this is only one of the thousand and one counts in the indictment against that fraternity of log-rollers and pork-barrelers.

As to the distribution of the Army, a war strength division should be kept concentrated at a manoeuvre area in some section where land is cheap and manoeuvring rights correspondingly so. National Guard camps could sometimes be held in this area in order to swell the manoeuvring numbers, and areas might be multiplied when funds permitted. When regular units change station, let them march or use their own transport. The School of the Line, that is, of the infantry, artillery, and such cavalry as may survive mechanization, could be attached to this active manoeuvre area for a large part of each course. A certain number of infantry, artillery, and tank officers could be periodically interchanged among the other arms with which they must co-operate in action. In the artillery, organization could be simplified by merging the field artillery with the coast.

Finally, to enter upon more contentious ground, the whole Regular Officers Corps could be livened up by introducing selective promotion and retirement. At present all promotion from second lieutenant to colonel goes unvaryingly by seniority. Un-

til 1898 the Army had promotion within the regiment. Although this arrangement had the great virtue of fostering that invaluable little patriotism within each unit known as *esprit de corps*, after the Spanish War there was a change to branch promotion—that is, the officers of each branch were lumped together and shifted from regiment to regiment according to seniority within the branch as vacancies occurred.

Whether it was wise thus to seek individual justice for every officer at the expense of *esprit de corps* seems questionable. Still more questionable is the change made in 1920 from branch promotion to a single list for the entire Officers Corps. Such a system prevents any branch from deciding how many officers of each grade it may have. With our top heavy Officers Corps, the surplus in each grade is simply dumped into the detached service list. Meanwhile an odd injustice excludes the officers of the Ordnance Department, the Chemical Warfare Service and the Quartermaster Corps from the permanent rank of general.

In general, seniority promotion obtains in all armies. It is not only a convenient, trouble-saving device which spares higher authority the necessity for making decisions, it is also based on common-sense in that all sensible people recognize the value of experience. It is in tune with the old-fashioned American desire that no individual, group or locality should be victimized by another. Nevertheless, as with all other good things, it is possible to carry this laudable desire too far. Thus, in the criminal law our system is so eager to protect the innocent that it leads to the escape of too many of the guilty. And in the promotion of officers there is a real case for a wider distribution of rewards and punishments.

The same common sense which admits

the value of experience also admits that experience is not everything. When Frederick the Great once expressed a low opinion of a certain officer, a general objected that this officer had been through ten campaigns. "Yes," said Old Fritz, "and so has that mule over there been through ten campaigns, but he knows no more of war than when he began." Sensible men both in and out of the Army will agree that an Officers Corps which permitted the pre-war scandal about machine-guns, the post-war indifference to tanks, and above all the present National Defense Act, certainly leaves room for improvement.

At this point let us note that promotions to the grade of general have always been selective; there a President can do what he likes. Had Leonard Wood and Black Jack Pershing remained bound to the slowly moving ladder of seniority, the United States would certainly have profited far less from the high abilities of these two dissimilar but exceptional men. In each case a career was opened to talent by an unusual President, Roosevelt—interested in military affairs, and not entirely ignorant of them at first hand.

Fas est ab hoste doceri: it is right to learn from an enemy. Still more therefore should it be right to learn from a former enemy. The Imperial German Army had a system which really did something to advance ability and to liven up the lower grades of mediocrity through selective promotion and retirement. All the more intelligent young officers were encouraged to try for the General Staff, and those who succeeded were more apt to be considered for promotion to the higher grades. On the other hand, the inspectors general in each branch acted as a permanent Plucking Board for the compulsory retirement each year of a certain number of officers still inside the age limit for their

grade. Thus, about the time an officer became resigned to the idea of never making the General Staff he began to bestir himself for fear of losing his job and a good slice of his income with it. Since inspectors general are but men, they must sometimes have done injustice to individuals. But it would be hard to get credible witnesses among the many who opposed the Germans between 1914 and 1918 to testify that the German system worked badly.

V

Why should something of the sort be impossible with us? Why should not successful General Staff officers be considered for selective promotion? That appointment to the G. S. should not, by itself, mean a guarantee of such promotion goes without saying; also that non-appointment should not mean too much of a bar. At the other end of the scale, why should not our chiefs of branch be raised to true inspectors general with the duty of retiring a certain number of officers each year? Before the fatal order was issued, the victims could be confidentially notified of their fate and given a chance to resign. By agreement with the States, voluntary retirement might make these men eligible for commissions in the National Guard. The inspectors general could be advised by Plucking Boards composed of major-generals near the retiring age and therefore with nothing either to hope or to fear. There seems a certain consensus of opinion to the effect that men like Heintzelman and Moseley would make admirable members of such boards.

That such measures would not lower the high tradition of our Regular Officers Corps seems morally certain. And that they would improve its present condition seems very probable.

THE JOYBELL

BY DOROTHY THOMAS

Cows bawlin' this time of night sound awful lorn, don't they? But I like it. When I hear 'em in a stock-yards when the train stops like this, do you know what it makes me think of? It don't sound like anything so much as like a lettin' up in the prayin' when everyone has gone up to the altar at the end of the service and been prayin' a long time. I don't mean to be makin' light or anything like that, but that's just what it puts me in mind of. There's a sort of "Thy will, not mine, Lord" in the sound of it.

I'm a widow and I live by myself in a little cottage near the church. When Mr. Fuller died he left me the big house clear, and he left the lumber-yard to me too for that matter—with the strings on it that my oldest boy Alec was to have the run of it. I just couldn't stand it alone in that big house, both my boys and my girl grown and married, and so I sold it and bought me a little cottage, and it's plenty big enough for me. It's too big, really.

I said I live by myself. I do in a way but not exactly. Mrs. Simmons lives in half of my house and I live in the other half and we're like neighbors and not like people livin' in the same house. When I seen how big the living-room was goin' to be, with me in it there all alone, I called the lumber-yard and had 'em send up a man to put in a paper-board partition, cuttin' it right in half, and had it papered the same pattern the walls was and had a door cut on the outside at her end of the

porch so we'd each have our own front doors and our own bedroom. I asked Mrs. Simmons if she'd like to come in with me and we get on just fine and always have. We use the same bathroom, but we each got our own little kitchen. She's alone and I'm alone, but if anything happened to the other we could just tap on the partition and the other would be right over.

Some folks think I should live with one of my children and I just let 'em think. I'll tell you why. I can't bear to see a son I've raised up goin' around sayin', "Yes, Madge. Yes, Madge," to every beck and call of a woman like my oldest boy Alec does in his house. It ain't that he's so sweet tempered, he's the image of his father, and if he'd 've got a woman like me he'd 've run her. I can't stay with my daughter, either, though we manage to get on. There's too much work out there. I feel I ought to pitch in and help and I wear myself down. Anyway, I'd rather be in town and handy to the church. It's the only comfort I've had outside of my boy Henry's letters. I go down to visit him sometimes and he's real nice to me, and his wife is, too, but he don't need me.

I could've married again and I guess that's where I made my mistake. You can't always know what you ought to do, not even when you think your mind's all made up and ready for it. John and I was kids together before I ever met Mr. Fuller or heard tell of him.

I remember one time a bunch of us

children went fishing down on the river and a rain come up and all the rest of them jumped up and run over to an old house there was, and nobody living in it, that was a little ways down the river. But John and me stayed right where we was, lyin' there under a willow, fishin', and let it rain on us what it would and come home all soaked, with seven fish, and his folks and mine, too, joked us about it a long time. And I remember yet how John laid there with his fishpole in his hand, watchin' for nibbles with the rain drippin' off his hair, and I thought then that when we got old enough I hoped he'd ask me, because I knew there would never be a man I'd feel as at home with as I would with him.

He went away to his uncle's to work, and by the time I was seventeen Mr. Fuller come, wantin' to go with me. My folks liked him fine. He asked me to marry him after we'd been goin' together less than three months, but I wouldn't say I would, right away, and my folks thought I must be crazy. I was waitin' for Christmas and for John to come home.

I supposed he'd come to see me first thing when he come, but he didn't, and one morning I couldn't bear it not to see him any longer, and I took two loaves of raisin bread we'd just took out of the oven, and put on my overshoes and went on over there. He was settin' by the stove and he jumped up and seemed just as glad to see me, and I gave the bread to his mother and stayed awhile. And he asked to walk home with me and I was goin' to say I'd like for him to. And I looked up and seen one of his sisters pullin' a face at the other one like she thought I'd come over there just to run after him, and I said it wasn't but a step over and broad daylight, but thanks just the same, and went. I supposed he'd come over before he went back

to his uncle's. Why, I never thought but what he'd come, but he never.

I heard afterwards his sisters had let him think I was engaged already, just to plague him. Well, I wasn't, but I *was* before he come home again, and married, too. And I seen I'd made a mistake before I'd been married two weeks. I just went into it like a sheep. Mr. Fuller was a lot older than me and he was always kind of contemptible about anything I done or said. We moved a little while after we was married and started up the lumber-yard, and not one word did I have to say about the business or the house we moved into or anything. There's nothing to dry up love in a woman like gettin' sniffed at every time you open your mouth. Not that I loved him—I never. But I went into it prayerful, and askin' the Lord to make me a good wife and mother—if that was to be—and I was good to him, too. I never answered him back more'n a dozen times in all those years and then it was for Henry, to see that he got treated fair.

I heard about John now and then, o' course, through my folks. Once I was back there on a visit when my girl was a baby, and one of his sisters had the gall to say that she'd always wished John had married me instead of the woman he got. His wife was poorly. After her babies come she just drug around from chair to chair and when they died of fever when they was five—they was twins—she died too, shortly after. And John went to live with his sisters. They never married, either of 'em, and he's livin' with 'em yet.

II

The June after the Fall Mr. Fuller was taken, I come home from church one night and turned in at my own walk and seen a spark of light movin' slow, there on

my porch, and it give me a start, and then I thought, "How foolish!" It was likely one of Mrs. Simmons' girls' husbands come to see her, and settin' there in the rocker, waitin' for her to get home from church. She's a Methodist. When I got real close he rose up out of the chair—he's a tall, long-legged man—, and took the pipe out of his mouth and says, "Allie." That's what he always called me. My name's Alice. And I says, "Why, John! Is it you?" And he grabbed both my hands and squeezed 'em till they hurt and then set me down in the rocker and set down on the step at my feet, like we was girl and boy again and we talked and talked.

Pretty soon, Mrs. Simmons come home and she sat down and visited with us awhile and then went in to bed.

When he'd gone back to the roomin' place where he'd left his grip, I went to bed but I just couldn't get to sleep. I couldn't feel right about him, comin' to see me after that long time, and then goin' away to sleep in a roomin' house. I could 've let him have my room and gone in and slept with Mrs. Simmons, just as well as not. But how would it have looked, him comin' out of my place in the morning?

I listened and didn't hear Mrs. Simmons snoring like she does when she's fast asleep, and it's a real comfort to me, and so I tapped on the wall and called to her and she got up and put on her wrapper and come over and we lay there on a cover spread out in front of the screen door, it was so hot back in the bedroom, and talked like a couple of girls. She said he had marriage in his eye, and nothin' else, if ever she'd seen it in a man's eye, and she guessed she had, havin' been married twice herself and had four daughters married, and I says, "You old goose! You ain't seen him but in the dark. How do you know what's in his eye?" And she

said she heard how he spoke my name, and I couldn't deny it. The way he'd say, "Allie!"

I'd asked him to come over for breakfast, and he come about eight o'clock. I got him a real good breakfast, pancakes and honey and his coffee half cream, like I remembered he used to like it when he was a boy and over to our house sometimes for dinner. After breakfast he was determined to help me with the dishes and I let him wipe, and then we went out in the backyard and set on an old wash bench I got there under the apple tree. And he spoke of my geraniums, how nice they were, in an old washin' machine I'd painted green and filled with dirt and planted 'em in, and had it settin' in between the trees.

Mrs. Simmons come out and talked a little and I seen she approved of him better'n ever, and I didn't blame her. He was better looking with his hair gray like that and in a nice blue suit, even than when he was a boy. Land! That was almost twenty years ago, that day. I wasn't much past forty and a lot younger lookin' than I am now. I felt like, if John wanted me, we could start out like young married folks, almost, and have all we'd ever missed.

I knew I ought to say somethin' to him about his religion.

He wasn't a believin' man, but I thought I'd wait about it until after dinner.

At dinner time I had him wring a chicken's neck and I fried it, and he beat the potatoes for me and we set down to as good a meal as I ever cooked in a hurry.

All that time he was tellin' me about the farm. He'd rented it out and was livin' in town with his sisters. They do dress-makin'. And he was clerkin' in a hardware store and goin' out to see the farm every Sunday. He said he had some laid by, enough to fix his place up again, nice,

if he had someone to help him look after it.

After we'd done up the dishes I excused myself to him and went in my room and put on my white voile, with the lilac sprigs in it. I never wore it after, and put it away to keep until one day Madge, my Alec's wife, come askin' couldn't she have it to make up for her little girls, since I didn't wear it any more. I thought, "Oh, what's the use?" and let her take it.

John liked it and spoke about it, and we went for a little walk and up past the church and I asked him why didn't he give his heart to Jesus and he patted my hand, walkin' along there, and said, well, maybe he would, if it would make me happy, and we turned around and went back through town. I was kinda shy about it, walkin' with him in front of everybody, knowin' it would be all over town, and when we come near the butcher shop I seen him headin' to turn in there, and I said, "John, if you dare to reach in your pocket, to get money to buy meat to eat in my house—I'll never speak to you again! Do you want the whole church thinkin' I've turned shameful or something? I'm payin' for that meat."

And I shoved in ahead of him and got it myself, tellin' them to put it down on my bill, like I always did and introduced John to 'em as a friend from back home. We was both red in the face when we got out o' there, though, and when we got home we walked out in the kitchen, and I laid the meat down on the table and turned around right into his arms, like there couldn't ever have been anything else happened. He kissed me. Then we went in the front room, with his arm still 'round me and he set down beside me on the sofa, and I was so full of love for him I thought my heart would bust with it.

And then I thought, "Allie Fuller, you

old fool, you, you don't know this man is lovin' you like you're lovin' him. How do you know but what he wants you because he's had all he can stand of livin' with those old maid sisters of his? Maybe it's the lumber-yard being left you that fetched him over here. Maybe he's remembering how you run after him that time, wading through snow, to bring his mother raisin bread and how you used to tag around, runnin' away to go fishin' with him or pick berries or anything, when you was little."

I put my hands up, either side of his face and looked right in his eyes, and they looked true as true, but I guess the Devil was in me. I pushed him away from me and walked across the room and set down in a chair by myself and he got up and stood lookin' at me, and says, "Why, what's the matter, Allie? Don't you want to marry me?"

And I said, "No. No, I don't, John, not unless you can promise me that you'll love me and love me, every minute there is left of my life, no matter what happens. I'm a warm-hearted woman, and I'm chock full of love I've been savin' for somebody all my life. And I ain't ever had any back, except from my boy Henry. And it's a long time since he's needed it. John, will you promise to give me nothin' but love for as long as we're both alive and got our wits?"

He just stood there lookin' at me, like he didn't know whatever, and then he says, "Why, no. I can't say as I can promise that. I'm a human man." And I says, "Then I don't want you, John. And I don't want ever to see you again, or hear tell of you. You can get out."

I was crying so I couldn't look up, but I sensed he went and got his hat that he'd whirled across the room and made light on the post of the rocker when we come

in with the meat, and he walked out and shut the door behind him, and I laid my head down on the sofa and cried like to tear me to pieces. Mrs. Simmons, she heard me and come in but I couldn't tell her. I just had to bear it by myself. He went away on the train after supper, and he didn't ever come back.

III

Maybe I should 've sent him a letter, but how could I, when I'd sent him away like that? I done what I felt I had to do. I wasn't going to marry him and have it all fade out, and maybe get treated like a hired girl again, by no man, 'specially by a man I loved like that. If you're the kind of woman that naturally wants to be doin' for a man all the time, and not even like a thing except because he likes you likin' it, and about just die with the hurt of bein' spoke mean to by him, you can't stand the thought of havin' somethin' spoiled you've kept fresh in your heart since you was a girl.

It took me years to figure out how John come to answer me like that. He meant it. Another man, wantin' a woman, would've said "Sure" to anything she put up to him, and thought nothin' of it. But John seen how in earnest I was, and that I meant it like life and death, and he thought of all he'd stood from his sisters and how tried he'd been, to keep from cussin' 'em out, plenty of times—mild tempered like he is—and he wasn't goin' to lie to me. I never talked to him, ever again, but I come to that understanding of it, God helpin' me, through prayer and workin' it over in my own mind.

I might 've wrote to him, but I didn't, not till last week, and I hadn't heard a word about him, except that he was still livin' there with his sisters and rentin' out

his farm. My cousins I heard from, back there, wrote me that much. I guess no one there ever knew he'd come over here to see me that time.

Last week I wrote him. It was the meetin' that did it. There's nothin' like a meetin' to open your heart. We got a good preacher now. A young fellow, that's educated himself. He's got such pleasant ways, and he don't pull against the evangelist that's holdin' the meeting and breed contention like some preachers might. He's right behind him, holdin' up his hands like a minister ought to. He takes the praise service and the prayin' service, and the evangelist gives his whole strength to the preachin' and the altar prayin' and it's been a fine meeting.

The first night of the meetin' I felt that the Lord was goin' to pour out a real blessing and was going to open the hearts of the people. And I felt the pull of the Spirit, right from the beginning. And I went home and prayed all next day, on my knees when I could. And after the second night, such an urge come on me to work that I lit in and cleaned my house, all through, and that didn't take long, it's so little, and then I pitched into my garden, pullin' and diggin' till there wasn't a weed in it.

The first Sunday after the meetin' got under way the evangelist says at the beginnin' of prayers, not the last prayers at the altar, but the ones that comes before the sermon, where they kneel right where they are, all over the church, that we was to pray for them long away from Jesus, and he says to think back and pray for some one that maybe hadn't had the benefit of prayer for a long time, and I thought o' John, and prayed for him hard, and I felt such a joy, prayin' for him, that I felt it run all through me.

That night when I got home I wrote

him a little letter and told him about the meetin' and said how we were both gettin' old and gettin' on toward the settin' of the sun and it would content me a lot could I know that he had give his heart to Jesus.

After that I didn't do nothin' but pray and do little things to set my house in order, like the work o' my life had been done, and go to church and walk to the postoffice twice a day, until his letter come. It come almost before I thought there was time. He must 've wrote the same day he got my letter. He said he was livin' with his sisters still and that he'd been laid up a long time from a fall he'd had when he was roofin' the cow barn out on his farm, and how hard times had come on 'em, and the mortgages had took his place, and his sisters was frettin' to go live with a cousin of theirs out West, and complainin' for bein' tied down to him, and last he says, "What do you mean, telling me to give my heart to Jesus when you know you've had the thing these fifty years?"

I folded that letter over once and laid it in my bosom, under my vest, and there it's stayed, sleepin' and wakin', workin' and prayin', and I didn't know how to answer it.

The morning after I got it my boy Alec come to me and I could see his wife Madge had put the words into his mouth to say, tellin' me that he thought I ought to take the money there was out of the bank and put it into land for him now, while it was so cheap. And I just looked at him and I couldn't feel no concern for him or for his weakness in coming like that and his woman pushin' him, any more than if he was a little boy again and snitchin' something that I didn't care about anyhow. All I could think of was that letter.

I told him I'd see, and I dressed up and

went downtown and into the bank and there was Mr. Hughes, the old one, settin' in his little pen with a lot of bank papers in front of him and he says, "Come in, come in, Mrs. Fuller," kinda bothered at seein' me, but polite. And I set down and talked to him. Asked him if it would be a good thing to do what Alec said and if he'd give me his personal guarantee that if his bank went under, or anything, and I left him handle my money, he'd save out for me what I had in. And he said I didn't have a thing to worry about, and he certainly would, rubbin' the back of his head with his hand and smilin' at me like he thought I was childish.

Ah, I don't know what all we said, but I could 've laughed. I set there talkin' away about that money like it was all I had to live for, like any old woman, and scarin' him with the idea of takin' it out of his bank, and all the time that letter was there, sharp against me, and I didn't care about anything in the world, but just that!

Two nights I didn't go to church and I don't know why I didn't. I just set by the stove. It was kind of wet out. I've got a little cook-stove in there that I use except in the middle the Summer when I get new wicks and use my little two-burner oil-stove. One night, that was night before last, I went out and walked around in the mist, and come home with a little cold. I gargled salt water and took some soda and went to bed and by morning it was all gone except a little that had settled in my right shoulder.

IV

Then last night I went to church. My daughter and Madge and Alec was there. Madge don't belong to our church but she goes because she thinks it pleases me, and you can see for yourself why she does that.

I don't set with 'em. I got my own place where I like to be, the other side the church from my folks. I just set there lookin' up at the sign over the choir, "The Same Yesterday, Today, And Forever," and a littler sign under that, that's hangin' by three tacks, and one corner loppin' down a little, that says, "Tarry Until," and under that the flag.

They sung some good spiritual hymns and I thought I never heard 'em sound so good. Then they had the prayers and the testimonials. I didn't testify myself, and the only one I remember special was Carrie Davis standin' up there in the choir and her face shinin' like an onion and sayin' over and over, "I thank the Lord that I am one of them."

The sermon was about the Second Coming and the evangelist told how it was near. If not this year, within the next three years, and he read from the prophecy, I forget just where, but somewhere in the Old Testament, and then he made it clear how Jesus was goin' to come in His glory, and touch with the tips of His feet upon the Mount of Olives, and how the Mount was goin' to bust in twain and cleft open, and a great stream of water was goin' to gush out, one on one side the Mount and one on the other, and there was goin' to be a great river, runnin' through the cleft of the Mount, and Jerusalem was goin' to become the greatest seaport in the world, and Christ is goin' to reign there in peace and mercy and preach every Sunday from the Mount.

And all the saved are goin' to go over there to hear Him preach and the Saints are goin' to come in great dirigibles that goes four hundred miles an hour now, and then, by the grace of God, will go one thousand, and gather up the halt and the maimed and the little children and take 'em over there to set at the feet of the Mas-

ter, and hear Him preach the Word, through a great microphone all set with sparkling gems.

And I looked over at Madge, settin' there with her mouth open and I wondered how that struck her and if she thought she'd have what Mr. Fuller left me salted down in farm land for her children by that time, and I could have laughed out. It didn't sound so likely to me, but there's plenty that 've laughed and seen what they laughed at come to pass, I know.

The evangelist went on, how Jesus was mighty to save, how He could cure the lame and them with devils, and the blind receive their sight, and I could see how it was. I've saved little children from dyin' myself, with the help of God, and that more than once, and I thought of John a-lyin' there, pained through from that fall, and no one he'd feel free to ask rub his back for him a little, and I looked down and there was that letter folded deep in my bosom. I could see the edge of it. For a minute I was scared, thinkin' I might 've lost it. I'd got so used to havin' it there I couldn't feel it, like you do with a ring you've worn a long time, and have to lay your other hand on to know that it's still there.

When they sung the last hymn, and everyone went up, I went too, o' course. I knelt down, with Mrs. Keeper beside me, prayin' for her girl that's half-witted, and old Mrs. Deal at the next bench swayin' and beatin' her head and prayin' over and over again, "Oh, my son, my son, my son, Lord Jesus, hear me." And the minister walkin' among 'em, layin' his hands on their heads and prayin' with first one and then another and the evangelist up by the pulpit, back of the green curtain that's on a little gas pipe rail, swayin' and prayin' loud, with a singing swing to it, and I

think I never heard people prayin' so good, or so hard, or felt the Spirit nearer and right down among us. It was the Holy Ghost, and no mistake.

The minister's wife was at the piano, playin'. She plays by ear, but I guess there ain't any hymn she can't play when she's heard it a couple of times. It was so sweet it would 've went right to your heart by itself, and with the prayin' with it, it just swept you up and along. And I looked up and around, gettin' my breath a little, and I seen that Scripture up there, "Tarry Until," hangin' by the three tacks, and a corner down, and I just had to cry. And I prayed hard, and I says, "Is that Thy will for me, Lord? Have I got to tarry in this place here by myself, waitin' to die and my children part my garments among 'em? Is that what You got laid up for me? And John there, hurt and sick, and nobody but them sisters by him and them wantin' to pull out and leave him, stayin' on to get the little he's got? Is that what You got laid up for me?"

Everyone around was prayin' hard, so no one could hear what I was sayin', and I opened my eyes and looked again, and seen that piece of Scripture hanging by its three tacks and I says, "Lord, is that Thy sign to me for what I am to do? If it was, and true, wouldn't it be up by all four tacks, and right and straight? I'll take it, if it's for me, and never murmur, but I wish that I could have a clearer sign. Lord, what's to become of me if Hughes' bank ain't good and my money goes? Where'll I be, and me old? Livin' with Madge and her throwin' it up to me every day how I didn't do what they wanted, and a burden on 'em? Give me a sign to be sure about, and to look back on, and know I done Thy will."

The preacher was down among us, walkin' around over peoples' feet and get-

tin' down on one knee to pray with first one and then another, and Agnes Parkins was layin' across a bench, with her hands raised up above her head and she was tremblin'.

She has trances and she always puts her hands up like that when she goes into 'em, and she's got the prettiest hands you ever seen—so slender you wouldn't believe—and soft as a baby's. Ain't got no strength in 'em at all, and has to run out to the barn to get her husband to unscrew the lid whenever she wants a jar opened.

Others was beginnin' to feel the nearness of the Holy Ghost, too, and all at once the preacher come and laid his hand on my right shoulder, and drops down on one knee beside me, and raises up his other hand and says, loud, "Arise, and go!" Those were his very words, that the Lord put into his mouth to say, and his hand on my shoulder. And I raised up my arms and the Holy Ghost had come down on me. I'd felt the fire strike in my shoulder and run all through my body, and no sooner was the words out of his mouth than I jumped up and sung out that I was saved, and I knew it, and would obey my Lord. And I turned around, with my arms up yet over my head (I don't think I could 've put 'em down), and walked right down the aisle and out of that church. And they all singin' and prayin' together.

Old Mr. Bates jumped up and run limpin' out into the vestibule ahead of me, and grabbed the bell-rope like he was goin' to climb it, and he begun to ring that bell, hard, and as I went past him he says, "Praise the Lord!" They was singin', "Joy Bell's Ringing in My Soul." They ring the bell like that when someone has a real experience.

I walked down off'n the church steps, and right on the two blocks home and by the time I got there I was runnin'.

V

Mrs. Simmons heard me comin' and come out to meet me, and says after we got in the house my eyes was shinin' ahead like they was fixed, and you'd sure see plain enough I'd had somethin' happen to me. I told her that there wasn't no time to talk, that I'd had a direct command and felt the Holy Ghost and had to catch the eleven-forty, and would she jump in and help me to get ready.

Yes, sir, in three-quarters of an hour, or I guess a little less, I'd packed my suit-case, and everything I needed, soon as I'd thought of it, 'twas there, and I laid my hand right on it, like it was a journey I'd been plannin' for weeks.

Time we got down to the depot, Mrs. Simmons and me, and got my ticket, and I'd give her my house key and told her she was to look after my things till I got set-

tled, my knees was just trottin', I was so worked up. We set there a good five minutes, waitin' for the train, and first I thought 'twas the train bell, and then I realized 'twas the church bell, from clear 'cross town and still ringin' for me, and I heard it even after I was on the train and I was here beside you and the train movin' out. Mrs. Simmons says, "Mrs. Fuller, what on earth 'll I tell your children?" And I says, "Tell 'em to quit worryin' about my money. I got a place for what there is of it. And if there's any left over when we're gone, Henry's to have it."

God's will! You got to wait and listen for it, and when once in your life it turns out to be the thing you wanted most, and the Holy Ghost itself comes down and shows you the way, with tongues of fire, as sharp as any pain, you'll think it's right that they should ring a joy bell for you. You'll know that you've been blessed.

THE WORST JOB IN THE WORLD

BY H. E. BUCHHOLZ

ROUGHLY, there are seven thousand superintendencies of public schools in the United States. Almost endless in variety, these positions have enlisted the services of a heterogeneous aggregation of educators, near-educators, and plain quacks. In many instances no higher qualifications are asked of the superintendent than might be stipulated for a clerk in a chain cigar-store, and not infrequently the heads of the schools in such situations could just about meet those requirements. But running up the scale, at the other extreme are systems where the superintendent is expected to do downright wonders. Since wonder-workers among educators are no more plentiful than in other fields of endeavor, the performance of the best available administrator may fall far short of the mark, less on account of his personal deficiencies than because his job demands the impossible.

In view of this very wide range in the quantity and the quality of administration called for in different school systems—in cities and towns, in counties and districts, and in State departments of education—a composite picture of all American superintendents at work would reveal little. It would mingle confusingly the efforts of those who lead exceedingly busy professional careers with the commonplace records of such as devote themselves primarily to clerical tasks; it would tell nothing of how and why one schoolman

has easy sailing most of the time, while another must work constantly against high wind and full tide in a fragile craft.

Instead, then, of considering superintendencies generally, an attempt will be made here to look at some of the trials that are the daily lot of those who undertake to manage public education for big American cities. But the reader must bear in mind that such problems as may come up for review are not necessarily peculiar to city superintendencies. Similar perplexities, possibly in milder doses and in modified form, rise up to torment a considerable proportion of all American superintendents—even, in cases, those at the head of very small systems.

As a fitting background for the narrative, it may be stated that a fundamental defect of most important superintendencies is that they have been expanded into jobs too big and complicated for any one man to handle. By the very process which gradually developed what at first was an insignificant clerical post into what is now a position of many intricacies and large responsibilities, almost unbearable burdens were loaded upon the superintendents. To be sure, in the larger systems the superintendent has been surrounded with a staff of aides, but we shall see that, as often as not, this staff only adds to his worries, and that he is still called upon to perform, single-handed and against all sorts of opposition, so many and such varied duties that even a super-

ficial sampling of them may well persuade the layman that here, certainly, is the worst job in the world.

This survey will ignore those superintendents who go into office by popular vote, although in many sections of the country this preposterous method of selection still obtains in State, county, and city systems. On the whole, wherever the head of the schools is elected in like manner to the sheriff and the clerk of the court, the salary paid him is relatively small; his post is regarded as a purely political berth, even by himself; his professional qualifications are in a fair way to be lacking altogether, since usually they are not made a condition for his candidacy; and finally, the standard of administration demanded of him is not likely to be as high as in a system where the superintendent is appointed.

II

Mention of appointment leads to the first major source of neuresthenia in the career of a superintendent. As a rule, the appointing power is vested in a board of education. This body may be composed of anywhere from three to fifteen or even more members. Unless a superintendent is called to office unanimously, he starts off with a serious handicap; and even should he represent the choice of the entire board he is never free from the danger that it may become divided, if not because of his own acts, then because of friction between the members. When they begin to quarrel, either with the professional head of the system or among themselves, it is the superintendent who bears the brunt of every blow that is struck.

There are ideal boards of education in the United States—but not many. Although the proper functions of a board

may be perfectly clear to students of education, only occasionally are they understood—and observed—by the members. As with college trustees, so the lay members of a board of education come readily to regard themselves as experts in school administration. Their opinions, as like as not conceived in ignorance and nourished on prejudice, are stacked against the professional judgments of the superintendent, and this in an unhappy situation where the board is the supreme authority.

A wise school administrator aims to have one or two members of the board who can be counted on as confidants and lay advisers. Naturally, he seeks such support among the stronger members and, having found it, consults them in advance concerning any important proposal he may think to submit to the board, or any statement he may issue to the public. He does this not only as a wise precautionary measure in his purpose of working harmoniously with the board, but also to get a more or less informed and intelligent lay reaction to his administrative plans.

But just as he will not regard it as prudent to let all the commissioners know that he is training with a selected few, so he doesn't dare rest his fate completely in the hands of these intimates. He is fortunate if he has an ardent supporter or two on the board—domineering individuals who can carry the other members along with them. He is unfortunate if, having found such a champion, that champion for one reason or another turns enemy, since he is likely to become as ardent and powerful in his opposition as he once was in his support.

An illustration in point is that of an eminent schoolman who was persuaded to give up a pleasant and secure berth to enter a system that needed radical overhauling. He came largely upon the rec-

ommendation of one school commissioner who was capable of swinging the whole board. This commissioner at first was a sincere admirer of the superintendent and a strong advocate of the plans he proposed. But as the commissioner, through his close contact with the superintendent, became more familiar with school matters, the notion came to him that Providence had designed him not only to run the board, but also to run the superintendent and the schools.

The superintendent was not a man to accept dictation upon professional matters from others, and certainly not from a layman. Thus in time clashes began between him and the usurping member. The superintendent was fighting for principles; the commissioner soon forgot principles and fought for gore. When the smoke cleared, a rubber-stamp local educator was in the superintendent's office and the imported schoolman was sitting on the curb, jobless.

For a superintendent, the most satisfactory board with which to work is one with several strong members who are keenly interested in public education and strive to bring the board to the support of the superintendent's policies. An entire board of such members would hardly work well as a unit or with the schoolman. Consequently, a majority of the commissioners may well be representative of such material as dietitians would label roughage. So long as a superintendent with a board of this kind can retain the support of the selected few, he has his major problem solved, provided the roughage is not made up of weak-kneed creatures who are susceptible to pressure from the outside and, being easily led, begin to make trouble in the board by seeking to reflect the views of persons who are hostile to the administrator.

But it must not be presumed that a superintendent who succeeds in handling his board satisfactorily will have the rest of his time free for his professional duties. While the board is the most important factor in his life, it is merely one of a whole series of itches that may beset him at any time. Back of it is the political machinery of the State—municipal government, county commissioners, Legislature. These various bodies, quite properly perhaps, think it their duty to scrutinize with magnifying glasses all money spent for public education. They look on school costs in an entirely different light from that in which they study other governmental outlays. Mayors, city councilmen, county commissioners, legislators, and other such politicians get few if any plums out of a decently run school system. If ten new members are to be added to the teaching corps, they are not likely even to be consulted. On the other hand, if three additional street-cleaners are to be hired, they have the naming of them.

This explains why, when State officials begin to nose into expenditures for education, they appear so much more solicitous about the tax burden than when passing appropriations for paving streets, building courthouses, or loading governmental bureaus with more clerks. But the superintendent must deal with these politicians—it is part of his job. They hold the strings to the money-bags. He must get funds from them for maintaining the schools. If the schools are not maintained efficiently, he is damned, and his damning is not lessened if he says in his defense that they suffered because the politicians refused to give him as much money as he asked for. Should he do this, the politicians may come for his hide—and get it.

Moreover, for several reasons, his protest will not carry much weight with the

people. First, when mere lump sums are mentioned, almost any school budget seems so large to the uninitiated as to provide for all essential needs. Secondly, the public regards it as part of the superintendent's business to get as much money as may be required. If he fails to do this, he has simply fallen down on his job.

III

And so the superintendent, while striving to keep his board in a harmonious frame of mind, must go forth and face a more troublesome gang in the City Hall, the Courthouse, or the State Capitol. Politicians, ready to make capital whenever they can by having it appear that they are guarding the people's money carefully, always delight to make a mountain out of a mole-hill in the matter of school expenditures.

On an annual budget of, say, \$9,000,000, it may be shown that a school system spent \$23 for toasters to be used in the domestic science classes. To call the superintendent before a board of estimates and scold him roundly for such extravagance; to hint that he is making tea-rooms out of the schools; to demand details as to the cost for bread and electricity in demonstrating the toasters, and to inquire, slyly, what becomes of the toast—all such quizzing of a schoolman by the politicians makes good news copy. The poor superintendent, who is tempted to throw ink-wells at his tormentors, must remain polite while being lectured by cheap politicians, realizing all the while that the newspapers will make much ado about how he spent several uncomfortable hours on the grill before the honest watchdogs of the treasury.

Moreover, the superintendent is continually being approached by all sorts of

politicians who demand that he do this, that, or the other thing for one of their constituents. No matter how averse he may be to playing politics he can't afford to give offense unnecessarily. He is asked to give special consideration to an applicant for a teaching position; he is requested to transfer a teacher to a better school; he is urged to make certain concessions for a pupil; he is told off to listen patiently to the tale of a pest. He could, of course, in every such instance yield properly to righteous indignation, but that would not be politic—and he must be politic. He realizes that at some future time these same politicians may be in a position to help or block his programme, and it would be unwise to humor a natural impulse when it might mean injury to the schools.

A superintendent who hopes to survive must take account of the fact that a politician's mind works differently from that of a schoolman. A suggestion that might appear grossly indecent to a pedagogue may be made by the politically-minded in perfect innocence. For example: A principalship was to be filled. An influential politician presented his candidate to the superintendent. The mere fact this candidate sought to reach the schoolman in that way cast doubt upon his professionalism. But the superintendent in dealing with the politician wisely ignored this point. He listened attentively, appeared to be weighing all that the politician said, and then named a principal of his own selection.

Just as soon as the appointment was announced the politician again appeared on the scene. Complacently he explained that inasmuch as he had not interfered with the superintendent in naming the principal, it was now in order for the schoolman to find some other job in the

system for the politician's candidate. An unsophisticated pedagogue might have regarded the proposal as insolent, but the seasoned superintendent took account of the fact that a politician regards every opening in the public service as a plum, and that his game is to gather plums. So the superintendent smiled sweetly and said he would see what could be done.

While keeping his board in line and handling the politicians in such a manner that he will not stir up hostility among them, the superintendent must not overlook the personal problems that blossom in his own organization. First comes the staff of assistants and supervisors. It is his job to maintain a well-rounded system, but when he turns to these aides he does not always encounter a force disposed to coöperate with him to this end. Many of his immediate subordinates are specialists in their respective fields, and the specialist in one branch of a science has a lopsided conception of the whole field.

Assistants who have charge of secondary education most likely are enthusiasts either for high-schools in general or, in a narrower sense, for some type of high-school activity; supervisors of elementary education demand that the grades—the backbone of the system—be satiated with cream before a drop of skimmed milk goes to any other division; kindergarten supervisors are hot for expanding the scope of their line; directors of music, of art, of physical education, of domestic science—each is prepared to ride his hobby roughshod over the system.

The superintendent is called upon to hold all these people in check without, in the process, spilling any of their enthusiasm. To the outsider, and even to many within the ranks, there may appear to be perfect coöperation; but under the surface he is forever striving to fit square

plugs into round holes, to nip wild shoots from promising plants, to prevent experts from engaging in a battle royal. He can turn to no authentic data showing what percentage of the whole budget should go to secondary education, to manual training, to primary grades, to athletics; he must work out the details for himself from day to day and strive stealthily to make them at least approximate his conception of what would be proper.

He may have acquired recently a new director of domestic science who within a short period has been able to revolutionize the department. She has a facility for stimulating the teachers under her, and they are beginning to arouse great interest in the student body. Domestic science to her is the whole of education, and her ardor is at the same time an asset and a liability. At every conference with the superintendent she has a new trick with which she would play havoc with the school programme. Today her theme is onion soup. If properly made, it is undoubtedly superb, and she believes that it should be made the national dish by act of Congress.

She has grown impatient because she is restricted to classes in cooking. She should be permitted, she thinks, to tie up her speciality with other school subjects, so that an appetite for onion soup may be created among the boy students as well as among the girls. Her plan is to begin with geography. Whenever a State or a country that produces onions appears in the text, the discussion should centre around onion soup. While she rages, the mouth of the superintendent actually begins to water for a bowl and he begins blowing to cool imaginary onions, meanwhile planning how best to soft-pedal the whole scheme. Let this specialist get her soup into geography, and soon she will have it everywhere.

The situation confronting this poor superintendent is by no means novel. Its parallel appears whenever he confers with specialists in other lines. The art director has a pet scheme for making that subject the centre of educational gravitation. When he has been sent on his way, temporarily subdued, along comes the director of music with a proposal to score musically all school subjects, or the supervisor of commercial education with a suggestion that primary children be taught typewriting instead of penmanship, or the supervisor of industrial education with a plan for converting the entire school system into a practice factory.

If the superintendent gave free rein to his staff specialists, they would put public education into bankruptcy overnight.

IV

But after he has worn himself to a frazzle holding the staff in check without stirring up hysteria among his various experts, he must turn his thoughts to the teaching corps. In theory, he is their professional leader—he must set them an example of pious living, he must stimulate them to grow in Service, he must wage their battle for adequate pay, he must provide them with proper facilities.

But while he is using his good right hand to fight for them, his left hand must be devoted to fighting them. No matter what he does, he is certain to stir up resentment in some of them. The salary schedule he works out will dissatisfy the primary teachers because of the scale offered high-school instructors, or *vice versa*. When he plans a new building, he is charged with discrimination in having overlooked the more urgent needs of other sections. When he devises a scheme of promotion, if it is equitable, the grafters

will promptly be on his back with a charge of autocracy; if it is not, the honest teachers will come after him with pointed finger-nails; and no matter whether it be fair or unfair, he will be opposed in his attempts to operate it.

For every vacancy on the higher level, there will be a score of aspirants. If he promotes the most deserving, the favored one will not be especially grateful—he merely got what was coming to him, and the coming was slow; but the other eleven pedagogues will develop laryngitis proclaiming that, as always, the promotion was made for pull rather than for merit.

By teachers as well as by public, he is held accountable for the conduct of all members of the teaching corps. If one lone pedagogue does anything, in school or out, that is regarded as censurable, the superintendent gets the censure. By way of example a scandal may be recalled concerning a pupil who was reprimanded for too much patriotism. The youngster had been taught, at home and in school, to rise whenever "The Star-Spangled Banner" was played. In class one day, while a test was being made for accuracy and speed, from off somewhere in the outside world floated the opening notes of the national anthem. Promptly this pupil rose to his feet and stood at attention. The teacher invited him to ignore the music. He refused. She commanded him to sit down. He declined. The teacher grabbed up his test papers and ordered him from the room. A silly affair. But it stirred up a tempest in which both pupil and teacher were forgotten by a public which was hot for fetching tar-pot and feathers for the superintendent, to impress upon him its displeasure for his contumacy to American patriotism.

Should the superintendent survive the worries heaped upon him by his teachers,

he must wade on to the task of fretting about the student body. Individual teachers and principals, supervisors and assistant superintendents meet the simpler situations arising in their respective jobs, but when there is a really hard nut to crack it is passed on promptly to the head of the schools. Blame for every slip-up in handling the pupils is dropped squarely on his head. A building is cold, a boiler bursts, a roof leaks, a toilet is clogged, a child falls down the stairs, a contagious disease breaks out, or a student runs afoul of the law—whatever happens, it must be explained by him, and his explanation will generally be discounted as an attempt to absolve himself. Traditionally it is his business to inspect the boiler, the roof, the toilet; it is his obligation to eliminate all hazards; it is his duty to organize the health work. Plainly, here is evidence that he has not been on the job.

Thus in his official capacity the superintendent hangs suspended over hundreds or thousands of potential volcanoes—individual schools in which at an unexpected moment there may be a rumpus that will disrupt the faculty, a turn in affairs that will stir up the student body, or an incident that will make the school's patrons see red. Whatever happens, no matter who may have been actually responsible, the poor superintendent is made the goat.

But even when he succeeds in disposing of all the worries that are bred within the system and in the governmental sphere of which the schools are a part, he is not through by a long shot. Surrounding every school system are all sorts of forces that seem bent only upon making life miserable for its head. In every American community there are countless organizations and also hundreds of individuals who regard it as their prerogative to take the superintendent to task and tell him

how they want the schools run. They undertake to dictate what subjects shall be taught and how; what holidays are to be observed and why; what salaries are to be paid and what promotions made; what textbooks are to be adopted, and what form of discipline is to be practiced. Whether their motives are good or bad, the suggestions they offer are usually punk.

At some time or another every superintendent is sure to hear from the American Legion, the Federation of Labor, the local Chamber of Commerce, the Daughters of the Revolution, the Child Health Association, the Flag Association, the Anti-Saloon League, the Lord's Day Alliance, the Rotary Club, the Parent-Teacher Associations, many of the local men's clubs, all of the local women's clubs, the B'nai B'rith, the Tall Cedars of Lebanon, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Master Boiler-Makers' Association, miscellaneous alumni, ditto alumnæ and the grand jury.

Each such group presumes that it must advise the head of the schools regarding things about which it knows nothing and about which he knows a great deal. He must listen respectfully and patiently. Perennially he receives a delegation of big business men who demand that "The Merchant of Venice" be withdrawn from all school libraries. The character of Shylock, it appears, is a libel upon their honorable calling. In communities where the colored race has any influence, its representatives find many reasons for protesting any effort within the schools to diminish the glory of that race. The Third Reader that contains a character named Nigger must either be put on the black-list or else the character renamed. In one city where the dark brethren are strong enough to have several of their race on the school board, a

fight is now on to have all textbooks in American history revised so as to make no mention of the fact that at one time American Negroes were slaves. The protestants insist that so long as American histories are truthful on this point they tend to develop an inferiority complex among innocent colored pupils.

In addition to these groups of propagandists, there are the busy-bodies in general practise who see, write or telephone the superintendent, or bombard him with anonymous letters to the press. The head of the schools is always being reminded that, since he is a public servant of a peculiar type, his manner of running the system must meet with the approbation of the people—and each and every busy-body presumes that he is the people. Even should one of them come along with a plainly preposterous proposal, the superintendent does not dare dismiss it with ridicule, for if he does it will be interpreted as a reflection on the superintendent himself, who should keep the public well informed regarding the schools. This explains why at the end of many a wearisome day, he puts on his claw-hammer and attends a stupid banquet or conference for the purpose of explaining to a handful of nit-wits what he is doing with the money that is so lavishly appropriated for public education.

Many of those who pester the superintendent have something to sell. It is not uncommon for such go-getters to make a bid for a courteous reception by having some prominent citizen or perhaps a school board member arrange for the audience. The interview may not have progressed far before the discerning schoolman sees part of the wolf under the sheep's clothing—or else detects him by the smell. But he must move cautiously, for a misstep may be disastrous.

V

But there is no need to go on. Enough has been said to show that the school superintendent in America does not snore upon a bed of roses. By comparison to his lot, that of Ishmael was soft. When fate decreed that every man's hand should be against the first-born of Hagar, it at least accorded him the privilege of retaliation. But the superintendent, when he comes to suspect that the whole populace is against him, has to repress any urge to get into action, except, of course, if he wishes to be turned out into the world jobless. He must look as if he likes it. Should he reveal even a shadow of the resentment that must smoulder away down in his soul most of the time, he will be written down as not fitted temperamentally for his job. Then it is only a matter of time before his enemies will be throwing dice for his scalp.

It may be that in the golden future conditions can be so remedied that a school superintendent in the United States will be able to give all his efforts to big professional matters; when he will be safe in his office, provided he is capable, even though he should pooh-pooh a politician or wring the neck of an obstreperous board member. Then he may have an official bouncer outside his door who, at the touch of a button, will come in, pick up whatever he may find in the visitors' chairs, and drop it out the window.

Occasionally, when I come upon a superintendent unannounced in the late afternoon, and find him gazing meditatively out the window, I am pleased to believe that he may be dreaming of such a day; but it is probably much more likely that he is wondering why he holds on to a job that is so hard to get, so easy to lose, and hardly worth having.

THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

Language

GOOD AND BAD GRAMMAR

BY JANET RANKIN AIKEN

WHILE the grammarian may define the thing differently, it is nevertheless true that a mistake in grammar is simply a linguistic change (innovation or archaism) which happens to have got itself condemned. Every one of the numerous alterations in our way of speaking is a potential mistake, but many or most of them pass without challenge. Those which get held up are the mistakes.

When, for example, we use the word *stuff* (which to Samuel Johnson meant *nonsense*) to mean *artistic output* or *skill*, as in "He certainly knows his stuff," we are committing a potential offense against the code of English grammar. We have passed a stop-light, and if a cop is around we shall probably get a ticket. But in the case of *stuff* no cop is around. While it may be a colloquialism, it is not considered a grammatical mistake to use *stuff* to mean *skill*, even though this meaning is almost exactly opposite to one the word carried two centuries ago. *Stuff* has managed to pass the stop-light without getting held up.

Many such changes have got by and get by every day. But the grammarian makes a selection of certain changes that he dislikes, and puts them outside the pale as sins against grammar. *Stuff* may reverse its meaning, but *leave* must never mean *let*, as in "Leave me do it." *Fond* may mean *affectionate* where to Shakespeare it meant *silly*, but *nice* must not

mean *agreeable*, nor *apt* mean *likely*. We may add the extra possessive inflection *s* to *your*, making the double possessive *yours*, but we must never add the possessive inflection *n* to make *yourn*, a formation of precisely the same kind.

If every change in speech is potentially a mistake, upon what basis do the grammars select those particular changes which they are to exclude from good linguistic society? It is easier to say what the basis is not than what it is. In the first place, it is not a knowledge of the history of the English language.

This fact is shown by the grammarians' treatment of the words *slow* and *quick*. Who has not been told that *slow* and *quick* are adjectives and not adverbs, so that *work slow* and *come quick* are among the things he must not say? Yet any student of Anglo-Saxon knows that historically *slow* and *quick* are just as much adverbs as *fast*, to which people have never pinned the *ly* ending. Traditionally, *come quickly* is the mistake and *come quick* the correct form. Traditionally, we should say *work slow*, *shout loud*, *dig deep*, *speak smooth*, *fling wide*. Traditionally, these words as well as *hot*, *evil*, *bitter*, *soft*, *right*, *sharp*, *clean*, *merry*, *thick*, and *sweet* are all adverbs. A few such words—for example, *deep* and *wide*—are indeed in fairly good adverbial standing, and certain radicals have taken up the cudgels for *slow* and *quick*. That they should ever be condemned betrays the grammarian's ignorance of linguistic history.

How shall I correct a student who says *he swang*, when I know that *swang* is and always has been the past tense of *swing*, and that *swung* in the past tense is the interloper? And in the same class are *slank* and *wrang*, historically correct, which I must alter into *slunk* and *wrung*. If I may—nay, must—say *sang*, *drank*, *swam*, *sprang*, *rang*, and *began*, is it not reasonable to permit *swang*, *slank*, and *wrang*?

Thus an intelligent fidelity to linguistic history has never been the basis of grammatical rules. What then? Perhaps it is speech efficiency which the grammarian pursues. Perhaps his pronouncements are for the purpose of making speech express meaning most effectively.

Regretfully we must admit that it is not. If usefulness were the test, would the admirably useful word *ain't* be under a ban, so that instead of the easy *ain't I* we must use the awkward *am I not*? Would we be refused the use of the sexless *they* to indicate male or female in "Everyone said they could come"? While many useful expressions do slip past the grammarians and get themselves adopted, the plea of usefulness will not help a good word once it is condemned. It will not let *ain't* out of jail.

Perhaps it is beauty—indeed, the grammarian will be the first to agree that it is—which stands behind the selection of those particular changes which are to be called bad English. Bad English is ugly, good English beautiful? I cannot see it. Both are equally ugly when badly or ignobly used, both equally beautiful when used skillfully. If there is one beauty of a classicist like Pater, there is another of a pedestrian like Bennett, and still another of a simple man like Uncle Remus. There is a loveliness of jingling in the "In-goldsby Legends," and a beauty of pene-

trating homeliness in the "Biglow Papers." Shall we restrict English to one medium for its beauty?

Grammatical English in itself is not beautiful. Some of the worst papers I have ever read as a teacher were free from grammatical slips. A thousand elements enter into really good English, and of these conventional grammar is not necessarily one. Good writing is making yourself a clear transparency for an idea worth writing about. Grammar is a matter of the particular style or medium you may choose to use. A grammatical presentation will fit a Pater but not a Joel Chandler Harris. Yet both attain their end of good writing.

What then shall we conclude is the source or spring of our grammatical Index of prohibited expressions, if it is not tradition, usefulness, or beauty? With the best will in the world to respect my job, I can see this source as nothing more than a mixture of individual prejudice, imitation, and the briefest possible tradition, with a strong flavor of chance in the general mess.

A more or less competent observer becomes aware of one of the multitudinous changes which are taking place at any particular time. The change outrages him. It is not what his parents or his teachers used to say, and so of course it is bad English. He does something about it—writes a letter to the papers, maybe, or if he is writing a grammar, puts in it the expression he has found personally irritating, warning others off from its use. The chances are good that it will become a part of the Index, and that teachers from that time on must red-pencil their students out of using it.

So Dean Swift in a *Tatler* of 1710 condemned *pozz* (*positive*), *put* (*boor*), and *kidney* (*disposition*), making so good his

objections that the first two at least have disappeared from ordinary English speech. True, Swift was not so successful in his condemnation of *shan't*, *bamboozle*, *baxter*, *mob*, and *communication*, but then, he was not a professional grammarian. In the same century Noah Webster was inveighing against *a means*, also with small success. In the past two centuries Samuel Johnson, Walter Savage Landor, Henry Fielding, and a host of lesser writers have set forth their personal prejudices in speech, to greater or less avail. But the most potent objector has always been the little nameless man, the textbook author. Any one of this company is free to reproduce in his book his speech antipathies with a good prospect that they may be perpetuated in other textbooks, which are written (as every textbook writer knows) by a process of revamping judicious borrowings from one's fellow authors.

It is pitifully easy to prove our rules of grammar arbitrary, unintelligent, inconsistent. One mistake or change gets by, another gets stopped. The adjective *like* may become a preposition freely, the adjective *near* is admitted with some reluctance to the same class, but the adjective *worth* must remain an adjective, though its use is plainly prepositional. The phrase *already* may be written as one word, but not the phrase *all right*. Scores of verbs, such as *write*, *incline*, *begin*, *end*—the list is endless—may be either transitive or intransitive, but not *lay* or *set*. We may *lay a floor* but not *lay down*, *set the table* but not *just set*. We may use what was originally a past tense as a past participle when we say "I have fought," but we must not say "I have fell." Why not?

To cover the worst of this confusion the word *idiom* is invoked. Where there is no possible explanation for a grammat-

ical pronouncement, the "correct" form is called good English idiom. Idiom is seen in the relative-pronoun use of *as* after *such* in "Such as wish may come." Here *as* is admitted to be a pronoun, the subject of *wish*. But try saying with the innocent rustic "I know them as want to come." It simply won't do. There is no reason. It is English idiom. You may use *as* with *such*; you may not use *as* with *them*. And English is full of idioms.

Now, if this were the whole story, if grammar were merely the arbitrary matter it is, one might be justified in a quarrel but scarcely in a war against it. One could afford to smile at its pretensions to logic, and one could proceed with one's job of teaching students how not to write, content to uphold inconsistent standards in an inconsistent world.

But this is by no means all the story. The real objection to grammarian English goes deeper, touching the very roots of our speech. For it is demonstrable that English would be a better language if the things the rules attack should become a part of it. Not only do the grammarians fail to improve our speech; they actually injure it, working against its sound and healthy progress. The facts to prove this statement are easily available.

Many an untutored person uses *was* for singular and plural both, saying *we was*, *you was*, *they was*, as well as *I was*, *he was*, *she was*. There is the very best linguistic justification for this practice. Every English verb except *to be* levelled its forms in the past tense, making just the same change that *we was* would be today. There is no reason why *to be*, alone of English verbs, should have two forms in the past. *We was* is every bit as comprehensible as *we were*, and its use makes English a better language, more regular and more efficient. No one would mourn over the loss

of separate past tense forms in the other English verbs; why then leave *to be* lagging behind the others? When my students hand me *you was* or *they was*, I should applaud instead of cursing them. I wish I could.

In his printed plays George Bernard Shaw did some funny things with apostrophes (*dont, wont, Ive, havnt, thats, ill*), and so far as I know no one has yet called him to account for it. No one has complained that his plays are harder reading for the lack of these apostrophes. A few contractions—for instance, *I'll* and *he'll*—might look peculiar without the apostrophe, but for the most part these marks are unnecessary and ripe for elimination. Nevertheless, I must distribute these superfluous wriggles correctly in my student's compositions. What is good enough for Bernard Shaw is too good for them.

Consider the adverb. Would not English be improved if we were allowed to use *evil, sweet, right*, and the others mentioned in a previous paragraph, as adverbs as well as adjectives? And why stop there? Why not drop the unnecessary *ly* from all adverbs, as superfluous inflections have been dropped in all stages of English? Shakespeare dared to say "Thou didst it excellent," and "'Tis noble spoken." Why not we? The change would make our tongue simpler, more athletic. It would be a good change.

The words *who* and *whom* cause endless trouble to everyone except the innocent, who cut the Gordian knot by saying "Who did you see?" and "The girl who I gave it to," using *who* only. Theirs is an excellent solution, consonant in every way with the genius of the English language, which has levelled accusative and nominative forms in all nouns, and in some pronouns, such as *you* and *it*. Every time I

change a pupil's *who* to *whom* I am painfully conscious of sinning against progress in English. It is my job to make pupils *whom*-conscious, and more and more I hate to do it.

It is not always a question of simplicity in speech. There is "I'm going to go," where the last two words are obviously unnecessary and are indeed condemned as bad English. Still there is a fine swing and rhythm about "I'm going to go." It is better speech music than the curt "I'm going." It is like Shakespeare's "to airy air." I hate to correct it.

It is clear that our dialect is an improvement over Anglo-Saxon because of the unconscious drift toward an easier grammar, and ungrammarians should be the best friends of the English of the future, which should continue the simplifying process still further than it has been carried in the past. It is monstrous that these ungrammarians should be cowed by the schools. The changes their tongues naturally make are for the good of the language, and they should be made. We should encourage ungrammar instead of suppressing it.

In Utopia it will be done. In Utopia my proof-reading job will be taken from me, and I shall no more be required to red-pencil "I would like" or "to (too) good." But in Utopia I shall still have something to teach. Indeed, I shall have more to teach than ever before.

Children will be taught much more of the history of English. They will learn more of how our mother tongue drawled and mumbled and shifted its path from being complicated to becoming simple, from being choppy to becoming smooth, from being a poor warped instrument to becoming worthy of Milton and Shakespeare. They will not therefore be required to feel that English cannot be improved

from now on. They will be taught that it can be and should be.

Instead of being taught how not to write, Utopian children will be taught how to write. Their teacher will open to them good work by other writers and say, "Write like this if you can. If not, read and enjoy it anyhow. Try to see how Swinburne got his music and Burns his simplicity. Shout with Sandburg and laugh with Wodehouse. Get a lot of humility into your system and then try to make others feel, laugh, suffer, think with you. Make your effect. Make your own rules. If they work, you have done the world a service by making yourself an artist."

Won't *any* grammar be left in Utopia? Oh, yes. The sentence will still be analyzed to show just how thoughts are shaped into

words. Great stress will be laid upon saying what you mean instead of something else—upon what we may call unmistakability. Confused, tied writing is bound to be poor. If you use the word *alright*, it should have its full weight of meaning and not be merely part of a verbal mess. Punctuation should be used as Shakespeare used it—to represent how you want the thing to be read. If it gets across, it is good punctuation.

And perhaps in Utopia teachers may even begin recommending instead of condemning changes in English. They may say, "Let's all pull together and change *quickly* to *quick*. Let's welcome *it's me* and allow *dont*. Let's think about helping rather than hamstringing our magnificent linguistic heritage. We can!"

Architecture

SYMBOLISM AND THE SECTS

By F. R. WEBBER

ONE of the by-products of the recent growth of ritualistic ideas among American Protestants has been the revival of ecclesiastical symbolism. Every time a new church is dedicated it means a job for the printer. The ensuing booklets range from beautifully printed brochures of two hundred pages down to cheap circulars full of advertisements of the neighborhood butcher, laundryman and undertaker. But all these booklets have one feature in common, and that is an appreciative interpretation of the building's symbolism.

If twelve steps lead up to the main doorway, they are said to represent the Twelve Apostles. The doorway itself is declared to represent Jesus, the True Door, while its two swinging leaves represent His Two-

fold Nature. The three panels in the lower part of each door represent His Three-fold Office. The two panes of glass in the door represent His State of Humiliation and State of Exaltation.

"The circular window high above the altar," declares one booklet, "represents eternity. Its ten mullions represent the ten Holy Apostles who neither denied nor betrayed their Lord. These mullions radiate from a common center to signify the faith of the Apostles, which was centered in one true system of Christian doctrine. The three panels of the reredos represent the three Means of Grace, while the two riddle curtains signify the veil of the temple rent in twain. The six candlesticks denote the six days of creation, and the cross the Day of Redemption. The three steps on the base of the cross represent Faith, Hope and Charity."

Somebody once found, among the half-

forgotten books in a city library, a copy of Geldart's "Manual of Church Decoration and Symbolism," published years ago by an English clergyman. The book contains a large number of careful drawings, each with a shield-shaped border. The shield is an artistic touch. And so the Protestant church-builders began to study Geldart, and to borrow his symbols. Instantly the price of the book, long out of print, jumped from ten shillings to £3.

Geldart framed his symbols with shields simply as a matter of uniformity of style, but the Protestant brethren decided that the shield was an essential part of the symbol, and thus it came about that no new church was worthy of mention if it did not have a large number of shields, each bearing a symbol, in evidence. These shields were generally jig-sawed out of oak, and then carved and colored. They were glued to the panels of the reredos, and to the sides of the font. Larger ones were nailed to the ends of the roof trusses. Shields appeared in stained-glass windows, and shields carved in stone were to be found above every doorway, and even planted at regular intervals in the cove of a moulding.

In the ancient churches, a series of twelve carved figures was often placed within the niches of a reredos. They represented, of course, the Twelve Apostles. But which was which? In order to distinguish them, St. Peter was given two large keys, St. John a chalice out of which issued a viper, St. Matthew a money chest, St. Andrew a saltire cross, and St. Philip a basket of loaves and fishes. All of this was logical enough. We use the same idea today when we erect a group of figures over the entrance to a new courthouse, and give Justice her sword and scales, Labor his square cap and his gear wheel, Law her scroll, and Wisdom her owl and

ink-horn. Such symbols are merely artistic labels. But a label becomes absurd when there is nothing to explain: it recalls the boy who scrawled on his slate "This is a cat," but forgot to draw the cat.

Yet just this has been happening in many an American church. Shields, blazoned with emblems of every sort, are glued to any available blank space. It is logical to carve a figure of St. John the Baptist and another of St. John the Evangelist, and to distinguish the two by giving the one his lamb and book, and the other his chalice, but to adorn a high-backed clergy chair with these two symbols, as actually happened lately in a Baptist church, is completely absurd. In a Presbyterian church in Indiana I actually saw the symbols of the Passion carved on shields and glued to a baptismal font! And over the doorway of a Cleveland church are the shields of the Holy Trinity and of a well-known leader of the Protestant Reformation.

A Chicago church entrusted its chancel furniture to a concern whose artistic efforts had been devoted mainly to the manufacture of cigar cases and office partitions. When the altar was delivered, it was found to have a fly-wheel, carefully carved, in the center panel of the reredos. A mistake had been made in the cabinet shop, for the fly-wheel had been designed for the office of an industrial plant. But the manufacturer extricated himself from the difficulty by saying that the rim of the wheel represented the Circle of Eternity, while its spokes denoted the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

In a Protestant church not far from Madison, Wis., may be seen, in the stained-glass windows, a perfect Shield of David—and a papal tiara. A firm of commercial stained-glass men made the mistake, but

they explained it away by saying that the Shield of David represented the Old Testament Age, and that the tiara was really a bee-hive, the symbol of industry and of missionary expansion. That satisfied the church, but I am yet wondering what the firm told the Jewish temple in Halsted street which discovered a symbol of St. Paul in one of its windows, or the Church of the Immaculate Conception which found an Epworth League emblem in its north choir aisle.

One hot Summer day an enterprising reporter stopped in the shadow of St. Thomas's, in Fifth avenue, New York, to mop his perspiring brow. Happening to glance upward, he discovered what he fancied to be a true lover's knot, formed by the twining lines of the stone tracery. This fired his imagination, and he continued his study of the tracery. Soon he discovered some intertwined lines that he interpreted as a dollar sign. The next morning every newspaper in the country carried a first-page story to the effect that a true lover's knot and a dollar sign had been discovered above the Bride's Entrance to St. Thomas's.

Groups of visitors began poking about in the church, and they found it full of symbolism. On the front of a choir screen was a small oil can, excellently carved. The newspapers declared that the initials J.D.R. were carved upon it. The investigators also discovered, under a misericord seat, a fat capitalist and a surly laborer, binding the Common People with yards and yards of rope. Under another seat was discovered a scrawny woman lunging with a spear at a fat dwarf, who was rolling drunkenly from the top of a wine barrel. It was said to represent the conflict between Prohibition and Bacchus. Prohibition's symbol was a lemon, and that of Bacchus was a bunch of grapes.

Tourists began to return from Europe that Summer. They had read the Paris editions of our American newspapers, and had kept their eyes open. They brought back tales of the famous devil leaning pensively over the parapet of Notre Dame, of the huge oxen on Laon's towers, and of the old dun cow on the north transept of Durham. Some of them, having been to Wittenberg, told lurid tales of a notoriously vulgar symbol carved high upon the wall of the Stadtkirche there. In Cleveland the crowds on downtown Euclid avenue discovered a bat-winged creature over the main doorway of the First Methodist Episcopal Church.

So the American sects became symbolism conscious almost overnight. One was not surprised that the Episcopalians and Lutherans should accept such medieval devices, for neither of these bodies has ever severed company entirely with ecclesiastical art. But when Methodist, Congregational, Presbyterian and Baptist churches demanded true altars with symbols carved on them, and grape-vine mouldings twining about the Passion symbols, and even the symbols of the Seven Sacraments, some of us gave up trying to account for it. The next few years saw not only altars in Protestant churches, but altars with tabernacles on them, hinting at reservation of the Host!

A fine new church was built in a Pennsylvania town. It was a church of pronounced Calvinistic type, but it contained a beautiful Lady Chapel. The mistake was discovered, but it was too late to correct it, so an ingenious explanation was worked out. The high altar in the main church was said to represent Holy Communion. The altar in the side chapel was said to represent prayer. The *prie-dieu* before it represented Christian humility. The blue dorsal curtain (Our Lady's own color),

was to remind the congregation of the blue skies toward which its prayers ascended. The two candles represented the light of faith, which must be present if prayers are to be answered.

"But why call it a Lady Chapel?" somebody asked. "Isn't that a step Romeward?"

"Let us name it that," was the reply, "in honor of our Ladies' Aid Society, which gave so many socials and suppers to raise the money."

An exceptionally fine Methodist church was dedicated in Cleveland a few years ago. In the beautifully carved lectern is a row of eleven figures, exquisitely done in wood. Since each saint holds a symbol, it is not hard to identify them. St. Francis is there with his stigmata, St. Agnes with her lamb, St. Elizabeth of Hungary with her loaves of bread, and St. Joan is tied to the stake, with flames all about her. Certainly here is something unusual in a Methodist Episcopal church. But a member of the parish explains that these are not saints at all, but allegorical figures representing Faith, Hope and Charity, for do they not bear the cross, the anchor and the heart? The remaining eight figures represent the Eight Beatitudes.

To the Catholic-minded churchman a youthful figure shot through with arrows recalls the martyrdom of St. Sebastian, but the same image may be accepted in a Presbyterian stained-glass window as the symbol of a Christian enduring the fiery darts of the wicked. In the same way a picture of St. Catherine of Siena receiving the stigmata from a cross held aloft by a seraph may, to a Baptist, be only an allegorical figure representing Faith.

Stained-glass men and mural artists know that even the most ultra-Protestant sects will now permit popes and cardinals in their windows, so long as they symbolize great epochs in Church history. A

stained-glass lay-out intended for a church of most pronounced Calvinistic views includes St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Boniface, St. Francis of Assisi and various others, all in the vestments of popes, cardinals and Roman priests. But the scheme is welcomed because it is said to represent great epochs, of history, such as the Apostolic, the Patristic, and the Medieval.

A stained-glass man of unquestioned standing is accustomed to picture Jesus in Mass vestments and St. Peter in the robes of the Roman pontiff. He manages this in the Protestant meeting houses because he tells them that the Mass vestments represent Jesus's prophetic, priestly and kingly offices, and the papal robes Peter's spiritual leadership.

This new Protestant symbolism causes hitherto inharmonious spirits to dwell together as peacefully as the chiliast's lion and lamb. High up on the façade of St. Bartholomew's in New York St. Francis and Dr. Luther stand side by side in perfect peace. In the front of the First Baptist pulpit in Pittsburgh St. Augustine, St. Bernard, Luther, Roger Williams and Count Zinzendorf likewise stand side by side, all their differences forgotten. But in an Eastern Episcopal church there is no such harmony, for two figures, representing the high churchman and the low churchman, stand back to back, each staring grimly into space.

The symbolism fad will probably soon run its course. It will fail because it comes so easily. People take too readily to it, as they take to bad grammar, profanity and jazz. One is apt to grow suspicious of anything that everybody likes. But whether the sectarian bodies will return to the deserted revival tent and the forgotten sawdust trail once more, and sing of the stars in my crown, in my crown, remains to be seen.

Meteorology

THE CLOUDS AND THEIR NAMES

BY CHARLES FITZHUGH TALMAN

THERE has recently appeared in Paris a notable International Atlas of Clouds and of States of the Sky. This work, in its present form, is an abridgment of a larger one to be published later, and it constitutes the third of a series of official guides to cloudland issued since 1896 under the auspices of the weather man's league of nations, the International Meteorological Organization. The nomenclature it embodies—considerably revised and enlarged as compared with that hitherto in international use—is intended to govern the practice of weather observers in the recording and reporting of clouds all over the world.

As an iconography of the typical shapes and aspects assumed by clouds the new atlas is a remarkable achievement. If the splendid pictures it contains could be distributed to all the art schools and made part of their paraphernalia of instruction, it is conceivable that the next generation of landscapists would not, as their predecessors have done, arouse the mirth of meteorologists nine out of ten times when they undertake to portray the sky. The prime function of the work is not, however, to educate artists, but to enable everybody who keeps a record of weather to identify the clouds.

How successfully this function will be performed remains to be seen. There have been murmurs of discontent over the new work, as there have been over all previous schemes of cloud classification and nomenclature. There are, indeed, pessimistic meteorologists who believe that no method of classifying clouds can ever be much better than a makeshift. The

weather man's task in assigning to definite categories the ever-changing vapory masses of the sky is by no means so simple as that of the naturalist in classifying animals and plants. While there are certain forms of cloud that recur often enough, with but minor variations, to produce a strong impression of individuality on the mind of the observer, there is also a great prevalence of nondescript forms, and of skies in which the typical forms are mingled and confused beyond recognition.

Since, however, there are practical reasons why, so far as may be possible, the clouds should be classified and named, attempts to bring a semblance of order out of their chaotic diversities have occupied a large amount of attention on the part of mankind, and the history of these attempts is a long one. No formal classifications of clouds are found in the works of the Roman or Greek philosophers, nor, as far as we know, did any take shape anywhere in the occidental world until the beginning of the last century, but some, it appears, were employed in the Orient in remote antiquity.

In India, where rainfall was formerly a life-and-death matter to a great part of the population, clouds have always been of absorbing interest as rain-bringers, and hence careful attention was given to them by the ancient Hindu scholars. A Sanskrit manuscript preserved at Bombay, written by one Angiras, who is supposed to have flourished some time between 1,500 and 1,000 B.C., mentions twelve varieties of cloud known to the author. A more remarkable enumeration occurs in a Hindu work of the Fourth Century B.C., which says: "Three are the clouds that continuously rain for seven days;

eighty are they that pour minute drops; and sixty are they that appear in sunshine." No modern taxonomist of the clouds has yet ventured to carry the subdivision of them so far!

The Japanese, according to Dr. Fujiwhara, likewise possessed a system of cloud classification in very early times. In the Western countries popular names for a few of the more striking varieties of cloud—such as *mares' tails* and *mackerel sky* in English—were evolved some centuries before any European thought of framing an all-inclusive system.

Toward the close of the Eighteenth Century weather phenomena, including clouds, were observed and recorded on a uniform plan by the members of the famous Meteorological Society of the Palatinate, who were widely scattered over the globe, and the Latin instructions issued to these observers contain the rudiments of a cloud classification, including arbitrary symbols for recording certain types of cloud. In the year 1801 the French naturalist Lamarck suggested a division of all clouds into six classes—subsequently increased to twelve—to which he assigned descriptive names in French; but this proposal seems to have attracted little attention, even in France.

The man who is now justly regarded as the Linnaeus of cloudland was the English Quaker, Luke Howard, who was born in London in 1772 and died at Tottenham in 1864. Howard's epoch-making paper, "On the Modifications of Clouds", was read before the small and obscure Akesian Society in the Winter of 1802-03, and was first published in *Tilloch's Philosophical Magazine* in 1803. In this paper the author distinguished seven types of cloud, of which he presented descriptions and drawings, and to which he gave the names of *cirrus*, *cumulus*, *stratus*,

cirro-cumulus, *cirro-stratus*, *cumulo-stratus* and *cumulo-cirro-stratus* or *nimbus*. These names, though derived from the Latin, were, of course, arbitrarily applied, and, as referring to clouds, would have been meaningless to an ancient Roman. *Cirrus*, the name given to feathery clouds of high levels, means literally a ringlet of hair, *cumulus* is the Latin word for a heap, and *stratus* means spread out.

The Latin forms of the names helped to secure their adoption by the scientific men of all countries, but the great enthusiasm with which Howard's classification was greeted is doubtless explained by the simple fact that, though far from perfect, it supplied a want that had long been felt of some systematic method of calling the clouds by name. Goethe, who was one of Howard's fervent admirers, composed a poem in his honor, in which he credited him with miraculous feats in dealing with things so intangible and intractable as the clouds:

Was sich nicht halten, nicht erreichen lässt,
Er fasst es an, er hält zuerst es fest,
Bestimmt das Unbestimmte, schränkt es
ein . . .

Goethe maintained a correspondence with Howard, translated the latter's autobiography into German, and for some time made daily records of the clouds according to the new system of classification. Goethe himself proposed an eighth type, to be called *paries* (=wall), but this name for a cloud-bank along the horizon never took root in the scientific vocabulary. Many other suggestions for improving the classification came from various quarters, as Howard's achievement became more and more widely known. His paper was translated into French and German within two years after its appearance, and the system of classification was soon in-

corporated into a great number of text-books.

Because the stupid fallacy prevailed in Howard's time, as it does today, that scientific names and terms are inherently unsuitable for non-scientific use, it was inevitable that English equivalents should be proposed for the Latin terms employed in his system. Reversing the idea of the American entomologist who taught his children to call a certain insect a *Bombus* rather than a bumble-bee, an English meteorologist, Thomas Forster, published in 1816 a list of "common" names for the cloud types enumerated by Howard; viz., *curlcloud*, *sondercloud*, *wanecloud*, *stack-encloud*, *fallcloud*, *twaincloud* and *raincloud*. This list was once met with in a good many schoolbooks, but has now lapsed into deserved oblivion.

Howard's system, though admirable as a pioneer attempt to classify the clouds, soon revealed certain defects that led to the production of numerous rival systems, most of them based on his, though some were wholly independent. Some of these schemes recognized dozens of distinct cloud forms, to each of which was given a name, and the total number of such names now runs up into the hundreds. In a majority of these classifications the clouds are assigned to genera and species, bearing binominal designations (such as *cirrus filusus*, *cumulus humilis*, etc.), modeled after those employed in botany and zoölogy, and in the present international system this biologizing of the clouds is carried even further—the genera are grouped in families, and several varieties are recognized as subordinate to species.

As an indication of the formidable size of this nomenclature, I should like to set down here an approximately complete list of the names that have been given at various times and by various authorities

merely to the forms of cloud generically known as *cirrus*. Several of these names are mutually synonymous, and a majority of them are so unfamiliar—even to meteorologists—that they lie beyond the purview of lexicographers and cross-word puzzle-makers.

auroral cirrus	<i>cirrus lanosus</i>
band cirrus	<i>cirrus nebulosus</i>
bar cirrus	<i>cirrus nothus</i>
change cirrus	<i>cirrus pectinatus</i>
<i>cirrus capillatus</i>	<i>cirrus pennatus</i>
<i>cirrus caudatus</i>	<i>cirrus plumeus</i>
<i>cirrus communis</i>	<i>cirrus rectus</i>
<i>cirrus confertus</i>	<i>cirrus reflexus</i>
<i>cirrus costatus</i>	<i>cirrus reticulatus</i>
<i>cirrus cumuliformis</i>	<i>cirrus ripples</i>
<i>cirrus densus</i>	<i>cirrus rotundus</i>
<i>cirrus dentatus</i>	<i>cirrus sparteus</i>
<i>cirrus diffusus</i>	<i>cirrus stripes</i>
<i>cirrus dissultus</i>	<i>cirrus uncinus</i>
<i>cirrus distortus</i>	<i>cirrus undulatus</i>
<i>cirrus duplicatus</i>	<i>cirrus ungulus</i>
<i>cirrus equinus</i>	<i>cirrus uniformis</i>
<i>cirrus excelsus</i>	<i>cirrus ventosus</i>
<i>cirrus extensus</i>	<i>cirrus vertebratus</i>
<i>cirrus fascigerus</i>	<i>cirrus vittatus</i>
<i>cirrus felinus</i>	curdled cirrus
<i>cirrus filiformis</i>	false cirrus
<i>cirrus filusus</i>	filmy cirrus
<i>cirrus floccosus</i>	fishbone cirrus
<i>cirrus granosus</i>	magnetic cirrus
<i>cirrus granulus</i>	reticulated cirrus
<i>cirrus haze</i>	thunderstorm cirrus
<i>cirrus implexus</i>	tonitro-cirrus
<i>cirrus inconstans</i>	tracto-cirrus
<i>cirrus lactosus</i>	twilight cirrus

It was the British meteorologist Ralph Abercromby who, through the many photographs of clouds that he took in the course of his world-wide travels, proved that the typical forms of clouds are the same everywhere, and thus paved the way toward an international system of classification. In 1887, in conjunction with Professor Hildebrandsson, of Upsala, he drew up a system modified and enlarged from Howard's, in which ten principal types of cloud were recognized. This system took

account of the fact that there is a rough relationship between the shapes of clouds and the heights at which they occur, and the ten types were accordingly grouped in classes as high, middle and low clouds, clouds low at base but of great vertical extent, and high fogs.

The Abercromby-Hildebrandsson system was adopted for international use by a conference of meteorologists held at Munich in 1891. Since that time it has been in process of evolution, especially in the direction of subdividing the main cloud types into species and varieties. In its latest development, as embodied in the new cloud atlas, the list of main types runs as follows: *Cirrus*, *cirrocumulus*, *cirrostratus*, *altocumulus*, *altostratus*, *stratocumulus*, *stratus*, *nimbostratus*, *cumulus*, *cumulonimbus*. This list differs from those found in standard textbooks and reference books in the omission of hyphens from the compound forms and in the substitution of the name *nimbostratus* for *nimbus*.

Each of the types just mentioned is regarded as a genus and includes from one to several species. Just as all oaks form a single genus of trees, so do all detached fibrous or feathery clouds—known from certain optical manifestations to be composed of ice—belong to the genus *cirrus*, and the average citizen, who cannot tell

one species of oak from another, does well to recognize a *cirrus* cloud when he sees one.

The meteorologist, however, whether professional or amateur, having mastered the latest revision of the international cloud classification, describes a slender wisp of *cirrus* terminating in a tuft or hook as *cirrus uncinus*. He recognizes *cumulus congestus* in "very distended and swollen *cumulus*, whose domes have a cauliflower appearance." He notes that a cloud of almost any genus may assume an ovoid shape, with clean-cut edges—especially when it hangs stationary over a ridge or mountain—and must then be assigned to the variety *lenticularis*.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the newly-promulgated cloud classification is now undergoing the test of daily use throughout the world. On August 1, 1932, meteorologists embarked upon a great campaign of research known as the International Polar Year, the geographical scope of which is not, as the name implies, limited to the polar regions, but encompasses the globe. Cloud observations form part of the programme, and copies of the new atlas have been distributed to all observers engaged in this enterprise to serve as their guide in calling the clouds by name.

BLACK ART

BY GEORGE S. SCHUYLER

ALTHOUGH Grandma settled all arguments and discussions by reference to the Bible, which she boasted of having read through fourteen times, she had nevertheless a great respect for the Devil. She accepted the Word from cover to cover without question, and yet she believed firmly that there were Forces of Evil which it was useful to know about. God brought people into the world, but it was Lucifer who was responsible for the major portion of the ills, pains and annoyances afflicting mankind. Therefore, while one should never neglect to say one's prayers at night, to bless one's food, to keep the Sabbath Day holy, it also behooved one to keep a weather eye on Satan, and to know how to circumvent the machinations of his numerous disciples: the conjurers, witches, necromancers and what-not.

Thus, while the old lady could quote accurately almost any passage from Holy Writ and discuss learnedly the reasons for the survival of Jonah in the belly of the whale and the three Hebrew children in the Fiery Furnace, she also knew why and how certain powders sprinkled on one's front porch might bring disaster upon the house, how conjurers could kill enemies at a great distance, where to go and what to do to throw off a spell, and why certain people could not be injured by it. From her easy chair she acquainted me at one time with the mournful history of the Chosen People, the wisdom of Proverbs,

and the amazing virility of the patriarchs, while at another time, and perhaps with slightly more enthusiasm, she would regale me with strange and hair-raising tales about ghosts and witches.

In either event she spoke slowly, distinctly and with the utmost conviction. One could plainly see David casting the stone that felled Goliath, or a conjurer's victim running on all fours and braying like a mule. She was walnut colored and of great girth, with wavy gray-streaked black hair severely parted in the middle and balled up over the ears, a determined mouth, and dark penetrating eyes. Sitting in her rocker by the reading table, with her silver-rimmed spectacles perched precariously on the tip of her nose and the light from the kerosene lamp's flowered globe softening the fine little wrinkles on her face, she resembled an old Dutch painting.

Indeed, she was part "Dutch," for her mother had been a Malagasy princess from Madagascar, brought here as a child and bound out to a New Jersey farmer, and her father had been a German immigrant from Saxe-Coburg. According to Grandma, Africans and Germans knew most about the black art, and to her mixed parentage she attributed much of her interest in and knowledge of it. In addition, she had married a West African well versed in the voodoo ritual, a clever fellow who knew how to make the souls of dead folk do all sorts of queer things.

Whenever she was reading the Bible to herself, she would nod and doze. Slowly the heavy book would slip from her long, bony, brown hands and strike the carpet with a thud. The old lady would start violently, and, casting a guilty glance around, quickly pick up the tome and hunt for her place. This would be repeated two or three times, and then, with a final shrug of resignation, she would close the volume, push her spectacles back over her forehead, and, taking a small lamp off the sideboard, toil wearily up the long creaking staircase to bed.

But she never grew sleepy when reading or talking about the Forces of Evil. Then her eyes would sparkle, she would puff vigorously on her pipe, and rock slowly back and forth with obvious satisfaction. The Scriptures were, after all, only hearsay, a sort of second-hand information, though indubitably God's Word, but she knew from first hand about the doings of the Devil and his assistants, the conjurers.

Of the clergy she was extremely critical. Back in the kitchen where she prepared unequaled soups, roasts and pastries, she would refer in disgust to the particular cow-voiced parson who happened to be our Sunday guest as "that damned lazy chicken-eater!" And while she insisted upon the strict observance of the Sabbath and outlawed a long list of activities and pleasures on that day, she never attended church.

II

She was in the best mood to talk about conjuring, magic roots and the power of lodestones when she had had her beer and lit her pipe after a good dinner. Then she grew expansive and even garrulous. No meal at our house was complete without a pitcher or pail of beer unless there hap-

pened to be a jug of elderberry wine at hand. The entire family, including the children, drank beer.

Whiskey, of course, was taboo except as a medicine or for the purpose of adding authority to eggnog during the holidays. But Grandma herself ambled frequently and unashamed to the Family Entrance of the corner saloon, swinging her gallon pail contentedly, quite indifferent to any adverse comments. Not that there would be many, of course, for our neighbors were chiefly Irish, with a sprinkling of Germans. Bottled beer the old lady scorned as an affectation. But when the huge, gaily painted beer trucks bearing their pyramids of sweating kegs rolled down the street behind four or six sleek, plump horses, the rotund drivers beaming jovially right and left to their numerous acquaintances and cracking their whips in the air, she would view the spectacle with longing glances and a deep sigh of appreciation.

Once a day, at least, she could be sure that her thirst for the amber fluid would be satisfied. After business hours she swept, dusted and mopped the office of a brewery nearby. To me the place seemed enormous, with its rows of high desks and stools, and I marveled that a woman of seventy could clean it with such dispatch and thoroughness. In one corner, on a brass framework, was a highly polished beer barrel with a shiny copper spigot. Pipes connected this barrel with the ocean of beer in the cellar. At it the officials and clerks of the brewery slaked their thirst during office hours.

When the old lady felt her strength flagging, she would drop everything, wipe her hands on her apron, repair at once to the magic cask, draw a Gargantuan beaker of lager, and down it with a rapturous sigh. "Aye, God!" she would exclaim, wiping the foam from her lips with the back of

her stout forearm, "it cuts th' phlegm!" Then, with renewed vigor, she would spin the high office stools around, swing her heavy mop in gigantic circles, and shove her big pail of hot suds about, meanwhile humming snatches of hymns. To her there was nothing incongruous about hymns in a brewery.

When her work was over and she had had her fill of beer, she would sit down in the swivel chair in the president's office, light her pipe, and reel off reminiscences and revelations until long after the night watchman had gone to sleep with the warning to wake him when we left.

Her pipe was discolored and of clay, and though frequently cleaned with broom straws, it smelled vilely. Sometimes it got so loud, as she put it, that she would have to burn it out on the hot coals in the kitchen stove, from whence it would be fished out white and odorless again. But this seldom took place, for she detested new or renovated pipes as "not ripe". She always exclaimed profanely when an old pipe was broken beyond repair or use.

Pipe smoking by women was nothing to talk of in our neighborhood. All the mature women of our household smoked pipes, as did the Irish and German females up and down the street. Some also dipped snuff, while at least two daughters of Erin chewed plug tobacco and could spit as expertly as any of their menfolk. Nor did any of them offer weight reduction as an excuse for their indulgence. All were buxom and proud of it. At that time, of course, the cigarette was still taboo. Not only was it held to be an invention of the Devil, designed to lure its victims into lives of crime, debauchery and drunkenness, but cigarette smokers were actually looked upon as "queer".

Grandma's manner grew familiar and confidential when she began spinning her

yarns, the truth of which I never doubted. Moreover, she spoke with an air of finality that banished skepticism. Her repertoire of tales about haunted houses and black magic in and around Freehold, N. J., where she had been born in 1831, was endless. Sometimes she repeated herself, but not often. Her stories were guaranteed to raise the hair on the kinkiest head. They held me fascinated for hours while the red coals glowed through the forty isinglass windows of the big dining-room stove and outside the snowy darkness seemed to grow thicker and more mysterious.

One could be brave and cocky in the daylight, but who wasn't a little scared at night, especially when one had just heard the story about the conjurer who could twist off his head and walk around with it talking loudly on the palm of his right hand? In every dark place ghosts might well be lurking. Perhaps from every hole and crevice outdoors a horned, misshapen imp leered mischievously, while evil spirits sat astride the rafters in the house, lolled in the attic, or sailed nonchalantly over the housetop. And all in league with Lucifer! If he actually snared a majority of souls, as Grandma said, and left but few for God, it were wise to be very polite to him and his friends. Of course it was a little puzzling that God should permit him, a palpable inferior, to do so much evil when He had it within his power to stop him, but the old lady explained that God wanted to tempt us human beings to test our faith; that He worked in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.

In proof of her contention that the souls of those long since dead sometimes returned, voluntarily or involuntarily, to this earth, Grandma told a story that made little boys reluctant to enter darkened rooms. Near her home, it appeared, there

was a colonial mansion which had belonged to a wealthy gentleman before the Revolution. One Winter evening, while a brilliant ball was in progress, the Indians surrounded the place and massacred all of the family and guests, staining the snow-drifts with their blood. Thereafter on every anniversary of the slaughter, passing pedestrians would observe the dilapidated old structure mysteriously illuminated again while graceful, bewigged and powdered couples passed back and forth before the windows. Grandma had seen them, and who can deny the testimony of his own eyes? Finally, the neighboring farmers got tired of this annual visitation and burned down the house. "But nothin' wouldn't grow there", Grandma explained, "'til old Black Tom threw th' spell off".

This Black Tom, it seemed, was some shakes when it came to the black art. He was accordingly feared and respected by the simple folk, black and white, for miles around. He never did a lick of work in his life and yet he was always well dressed and handled plenty of money. Most witches and conjurers are pretty poor but this fellow was an exception. He was tall, slender and black, with grey eyes and blue gums, and he drank a jug of liquor every day. No one ever found out where he lived.

He carried a hook-handled cane, the tapping of which could be heard a great distance. When he grew thirsty and did not find the tavern liquor to his liking, he would hang a sizeable jug on the handle of his cane and send it off stumping by itself into the deep woods while he sat amidst profound silence and smoked. Shortly the cane would return with the jug overflowing with excellent corn liquor. Black Tom would offer everybody a drink, but even the most hardened sinners

would refuse because of the natural assumption that the liquor came from Satan. One smart aleck did take a drink once and smoke came out of his ears, nose and mouth for hours afterward.

Aside from his ability to cast spells, usually for some monetary consideration, Black Tom possessed the ability to turn himself into a black hound at will. On moonless nights he ran howling mournfully across the meadows, scaring late travelers, and making farmers bar their doors. While in this canine form, he settled scores with his numerous enemies, many of whom were afterwards found dead with their throats ripped by his teeth. I never see a black dog today without thinking of Black Tom.

Once the people thought to catch him, so they set a trap on the edge of the woods. Each night they listened. Finally they were rewarded with a yelp of pain. Then all was silence. Several men went out to see what had happened. They hunted up and down, but the trap was gone. The next morning its owner was found dead in bed with the jaws clamped around his neck.

III

Almost as notorious was a jet black African brought over as a slave but soon released by his master because he put a curse on the master's family and all of the other slaves. The removal of the curse was the price of his freedom. This fellow was widely known as an extraordinary fiddler and a right-hand man of Satan. He was in great demand at barn dances and other such rustic festivities. But woe be to those thoughtless dancers who failed to quit before the fateful hour of midnight, for then this fiddler became possessed of the Devil, and played the weirdest tunes im-

aginable, which compelled the dancers to jig all day Sunday or until they fell exhausted or dead.

Grandma herself had been present on one occasion when some skeptical or careless merrymakers were made to cavort at breakneck speed until they had completely worn the soles off their feet, while the devilish fiddler perspired, grinned and sawed away like mad. The only thing that saved them from death was the arrival of a preacher who, sensing their predicament, pulled out his Bible and read a passage, whereupon the fiddler immediately vanished.

Grandma wore a black bag suspended from her neck by a stout cord. She never said just what was in it but she declared that she would never be without it. It kept spells off. Those bags you bought through the mail order houses wouldn't do it, although the advertisements said they would. The really effective ingredients had to be gathered and prepared by someone who knew, and there were very few people who knew. Whenever Grandma went off on the street car to the suburbs, I figured she had gone to get some fresh contents for the little sack.

At times, after much glancing up and down to see if anyone was listening, she would confide in a lowered voice that there were many ways to become a master of the black art and be able to throw spells over one's enemies. Unfortunately, before this information could be obtained it was necessary to sell one's self to the Devil. The scale of prices charged by him was revealed in the Seventh Book of Moses, the standard text on necromancy. Although I ransacked Grandma's bedroom on many occasions when she was away from home, I was never able to find and read this valuable work, and yet she frequently came from her room with a black

tome which she said was the book of mystery and which she read with her nose almost touching the pages.

I developed an overwhelming ambition to get some of this inside information. Reading of the wizardry of Merlin the Magician, of the all-powerful Ifrits of Araby and of the wicked machinations of Queen Morgana Le Fay further whetted my desire. Grandma put me off as long as she could and then she finally capitulated, and lighting her well-tamped pipe, leaned back in her rocker, pushed back her spectacles and began.

Suppose you had a desire to view the invisible or to yourself become invisible? This ambition could be easily gratified by going through a midnight ordeal. Only one other person could be present. The necessary properties were a deserted barn or shack, a black cat innocent of white markings, a silver dollar, a large iron pot with a heavy cover, a medium-size mirror, and a very hot fire. Doors and windows had to be securely fastened. The kettle was filled with water and placed over the fire, the silver dollar and the protesting feline placed in it, and the cover held down securely with a rock to prevent the escape of the luckless animal.

It was essential that the water come to a boil at the stroke of midnight. While your confederate replenished the fire with fresh faggots and kept the kettle boiling merrily, you stared intently into the mirror with your back to the flames and saw the most astonishing things. Pressed at this point for details, Grandma replied that different persons saw different things, and that it was impossible to say just what any particular person might see.

If you were still present when the cat had lost all of its nine lives and was completely reduced to mulligan, its left hind leg had to be fished out of the bubbling

mess and immediately buried in the bank of a swiftly running stream, preferably below the water line. Three days hence, again at the stroke of midnight, the bone had to be dug out of the bank, cleaned, and thereafter carried on your person. When you craved invisibility, you inserted the bone in your mouth and the sharpest-eyed creditor could not see you. Inasmuch as our family creditors never experienced any difficulty in finding either our house or Grandma, I concluded that she had never personally made the experiment.

Perhaps to prove that she knew what she was talking about, she took me to see Mrs. Croman, a tall, gaunt, stooped old black woman who lived in two squalid rooms over a livery-stable. Mrs. Croman made her living by telling the fortunes of lovesick and worried white ladies who believed that the information she imparted was worth a dollar a visit. That she was on more than speaking acquaintance with the Devil was evidenced by the fact that once she had drawn a chalked circle on the floor of her front room and when one of her enemies stepped inside it he became completely paralyzed. Grandma admitted that she had not seen this, but one glance at Mrs. Croman's hollow, lined cheeks, her deep, burning eyes and clawlike hands convinced me that she undoubtedly knew a great deal about Satan's business. At the same time I made bold to inquire why she lived in such sorry quarters if she possessed such magical skill. Unable to clear up this mystery, Grandma muttered testily, "Shet yore mouth!"

Some years previously, it seemed, Mrs. Croman's son had seduced the daughter of one Mr. Chisholm, a part-Indian Negro famed as a conjurer throughout Central New York. The old man immediately threw a strong spell over the lubricious boy and had him crawling on all fours,

barking and howling like a dog, and forcing his people to chain him down. In vain Mrs. Croman sought to break the spell. In despair she journeyed all the way to Albany to gain the intervention of a woman there who was hailed as the queen of the conjurers. Meantime, the entire colored community awaited the outcome with morbid interest.

Much money, it was said, changed hands. Mrs. Croman returned smiling malevolently but saying nothing. Suddenly the spell was broken on her son and a stronger one cast on Old Man Chisholm. As though possessed of a million devils, he raced around and around the big oak tree in front of his house, hour after hour, until he finally dropped dead, a stream of black blood gushing from his nose and mouth.

Grandma furnished conclusive proof of the truth of this sad occurrence. First, Mrs. Croman was certainly alive and bore an appropriately evil reputation as a witch. Secondly, everybody knew the peculiar circumstances under which Mr. Chisholm had departed from this terrestrial sphere. Thirdly, Mrs. Croman's son was about town and admittedly queer in the head. Fourthly, there was the big oak tree still flourishing in front of the Chisholm residence. What more could one ask?

IV

Strict disciplinarian though she was and ever ready to punish the slightest disobedience with a box on the ears or a spanking with her hair-brush, the prospect of hearing more about black art from her was the most powerful force impelling me to hurry through my chores, especially on Saturdays. I welcomed the coming of the week-end, for then I was permitted to enter the parlor to dust the legs of the

square piano and other adornments not easily reached by adults.

It was the largest and most beautiful room in the house, with wide bow windows, heavy lace curtains stiff with starch, tall potted palms, stands of bric-a-brac in the corners, trays of souvenirs from the Chicago World's Fair, a bowl of goldfish on a mahogany pedestal, a suite of rococo furniture upholstered in dark red satin, and a thick green carpet spread with gaudy rugs depicting alert watch dogs, sentimental sheep, grazing cattle and slumbering cats. The big double doors of the parlor were locked during the week, excluding adults and children alike. Sometimes, if I finished my work well, Grandma would sit in the parlor, smoke her pipe and tell stories until dinner time.

My respect for Satan grew apace, and secretly I held him to be more powerful than the Master Himself. It struck me that he was a most industrious fellow, working twenty-four hours a day and with remarkable success. I wondered that he had time to look after all of the people he had frying in Hell, what with so many conjurers to direct on earth, but Grandma very satisfactorily explained that he could be everywhere at once.

I became increasingly eager to try my own hand at the black art. Not that I wanted to throw a spell over anyone (except, perhaps, when I was being whipped and told "This hurts me more than it does you!"), but I was eager to master the violin. Grandma had said that if one wished to become an accomplished violinist in a short time, it was only necessary to sell one's self to the Devil. Of course, you could never thereafter escape your fate, and when Satan called you to his torrid abode you would have to go without question, but I was willing to take a chance.

The instructions were exceedingly sim-

ple. One bought or borrowed a cheap violin and bow, walked to a fork in a lonely country road around midnight, seated one's self on a stump or boulder, and began sawing out discords. Presently Old Nick would come sauntering down the road from nowhere in particular, his violin under his arm, his pointed tail looped over his shoulder, sparks and fumes emanating from him at each step. He stopped before you and politely asked if you really desired to learn how to play. You naturally replied in the affirmative.

He then exchanged instruments with you and tucking your cheap violin under his long pointed chin, drew from it magnificent music. When he had concluded, you were ordered to play in like manner on his instrument, and to your amazement you exceeded your expectations. Taking back his violin and returning yours, he warned you to be on the same spot the next night at the same hour, and then vanished in a cloud of sulphuric fumes. After two or three nights of this instruction, one could play any musical selection ever written, but unfortunately one's playing, it seemed, had the disastrous effect of turning the steps of all one's hearers into paths of sin and sorrow.

The knowledge that my playing might thus exercise an evil influence on my auditors caused me to lose no sleep. Nor did I balk at entering the service of Satan. One had to make sacrifices for one's art. Unfortunately, I had neither violin nor knowledge of the countryside, but luck was with me. In answer to my nightly prayers, we bought a house in the suburbs.

This change of scene afforded a fine opportunity to get more information from Grandma. I accompanied her on several trips to the woods and fields in search of certain roots, leaves and grasses which she

used in the preparation of home remedies and tonics. We all hated this medicine but no one questioned its efficacy. She especially prized a peculiarly shaped root resembling roughly a human body. She would toil over steep hills and through heavy undergrowth to a swamp where it grew. It was guaranteed to keep away evil spirits as well as bad health. In the Spring, the old lady had a tea or a poultice for every malady, and if we objected to any of these brews and pastes, she would snort: "Ye jist dunno what's good fer yeh!"

On one of these trips I ran across a very likely road fork and I visited it alone two or three times afterward. Borrowing a violin from a neighbor's boy, I decided to go on and sell my soul and become a great violinist, filling opera houses with enthusiastic audiences and perhaps making as much as one of those rich chefs on the New York Central dining-cars.

Sneaking out of the house at eleven

o'clock, I hurried across the moonlit fields to my rendezvous with Satan. I sat down on a big boulder to play. The evening seemed most chilly for Summer, and I had never imagined that there were so many noises in the supposed silence of the night. Leaves rustled, twigs broke, frogs croaked. My ambition to become a great violinist waned with the increasing strain on my nerves; when, steeling myself, I drew the first mournful discord out of the fiddle, it disappeared altogether. In an astonishingly short time I found myself back home, alternately panting and shivering under a mountain of bedclothes.

Next day, when I shamefacedly recounted my adventure to Grandma, the old lady cackled until the tears rolled down her wrinkled cheeks and her belly shook as if moved by inner springs. She wiped her eyes with the back of her strong hand, and then, embracing me tightly, she said in a soft and tender way, "You damned little fool!"

A ROUTINE JOB

BY CARTER BROOKE JONES

THE editor of the weekly at the little Southern county seat drove out to the State prison farm, a couple of miles from town. His day book showed an execution set for Friday, but he couldn't remember who was to be executed or why. He had to keep close track of such events: he was correspondent for city papers.

"Yeah," said the warden, "a nigger name of Jack Clinker."

"Anything to the case?"

The warden got out his plug and bit off a good slice. "I forget, Joe. Dog if I know what it was all about. Better ask the sheriff that brought the nigger up here. You'll find him somewheres around—him and a deputy."

The sheriff had transferred Jack Clinker from a distant county jail to the State's death cell only the day before. Technically, the prisoner would remain in the sheriff's custody until he walked to the chair, but actually, county officers had only to loiter around, pretending to share in the responsibility.

The editor found Sheriff Maddox and Deputy Hardy lolling outdoors, their chairs tilted against the stone death-house.

"Well, sir," said the sheriff, "Jack Clinker warn't a bad nigger. I've knowed him ever sence he was a pickaninny. His daddy used to janitor up at the co't house. Well, sir, Jack got to usin' corn right smart. He got mean. I don't mean to white folks. He tuck and stole another nigger's woman, and that allus means trouble. This nigger

come in one night and caught 'em in bed—no place else. There was a big rookus, as you might expect. But Jack he got a-holt of the carvin' knife, and he carved that nigger up like a Christmas turkey."

The sheriff chuckled. "Say, you ought to seen that other nigger. His own mammy wouldn't 'a knowed him. . . . Say, you don't happen to know where Mr. Hardy and I might get a drop o' liquor?"

"I sure do," said the editor. "I'll drive you to a place in the country and bring you back."

"We'll shore appreciate it, Mister. We brought some with us, but we've plumb run out, and they don't burn Jack till day after tomorrow. The warden he's give us a little, but we don't want to impose."

Before they started for the still the editor dropped back at the warden's office.

"It's just a routine job," he said. "The city papers won't want but a paragraph. I'll give you a ring around noon Friday. No use comin' out."

"O. K., friend. But come out if you like. Always glad to have you."

"Thanks. But seein' 'em burned is no treat. I've watched plenty sizzle."

"Hey!" the warden called. "Don't forget this guy Holbrook. He's to go in a couple weeks if the Governor or the Supreme Court or somebody don't act."

"Yeah, that *will* be a story. There'll be staff men down from the big papers."

"We ain't had a decent execution in over a year."

"Not since Duchaine's."

"They run over a colyum on him."

"Well, I'll be seein' you."

"So long."

II

At night the farm convicts stay in a rambling frame structure that has grown, wing by wing, through the years. It can hardly be called a prison, though there are locks and bars of a sort. The older prisoners and the more feeble and sickly are sent to the farm instead of to county chain-gangs—these and convicts with some mysterious influence. Many have escaped from the fields or from the loose-jointed building, but few have eluded the bloodhounds in that flat country.

The little stone death-house is stuck on a corner of the old building, and seems an incongruous part of it. There are two rooms, one with two cells circled by a small corridor, and the other empty except for the white oak chair. Only a few strides away is the barbed-wire fence that runs along the main highway.

When the chair is called into service, convicts working about the yard can hear it snarl over its victim. So can passing motorists if they chance to stop and listen.

That Friday morning the white chaplain went to see Jack Clinker. There was no one else in the death-house. Holbrook was still in a county jail.

The chaplain was concerned about Jack's soul, but the prisoner reassured him.

"Yassa, Rev'run, I'm saved. I know I'm saved. It's come to me time and agin. I know I'm saved. I know it."

The chaplain read some chapters from a battered Bible.

Jack kept up a soft murmur of appro-

bation. He was in a glowing mood. Everybody had been kind to him, in the county jail and here at the farm. They had nothing against him. He had not killed a white man. They felt sorry for him. He was just a poor nigger, out of luck.

"Yassa. I know it. Tha's right. Shore is. Yassa. It's a fac'. Can't be no mistake. I know it. I know it."

The preacher prayed at some length. He left Jack exultant.

The night before Jack had joined in the singing. At this prison there is always a singing the night before an execution. The Negro prisoners gather outside the death house and sing spirituals.

III

A Negro convict was brought in by a guard to go over Jack's head with the clippers. Shaved heads are easier for the electrodes to work on.

Jack chuckled. "Well, frien', I s'peck' this'll be the las' time I gits a hair cut in quite some while."

"You'll be gittin' yo' wings clipped nex'," suggested the barber.

Jack broke out in a lusty laugh. "I hopes I see you, frien'. But you gotta watch yo' step. No runnin' aroun'. Take warnin' f'um me."

"Huh! A lots a runnin' aroun' I do here!"

Jack laughed until he almost shook the cell. "Well, I hopes when the time comes you're as ready to go as what I is." He dropped his voice, suddenly serious. "I done talk to Jesus most all night. I know. I'm tellin' you. Don' I know? Lemme tell you. I . . ."

But the other Negro finished his job hastily and left, flinging a goodbye over his shoulder. He knew that the warden's wife had a mess of meat-and-greens on

the stove. She would have the boss-man's dinner ready promptly at noon. He always liked to get an execution over by eleven-thirty, so that he would have time to wash up and throw a jolt or two of corn into him before he ate. It was near eleven o'clock already.

The chaplain returned, a trifle bored.

"Well, Jack, feeling all right?"

"Fine as fraug's hair, Rev'run. I shore is. I'm settin' on top of the world."

"Don't forget those chapters I read you."

"I shore won't. Not on yo' life I won't, Rev'run. I've done remember ev'y word."

The chaplain rested his hands against the bars. He quoted:

"For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it . . . For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? . . . Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

"You shore is right, Rev'run."

"I think you'll get through all right, Jack."

"I won't miss it, Rev'run."

IV

The prisoners at work in the yard and in the kitchen did not sneak up close to the death-house to see and hear what they could. No one was interested: this was just another execution. There had been a good many since the sheriffs quit hanging men. Some celebrated characters had sat in that chair, and sometimes the whole farm had been keyed to a pitch. But an ordinary burning was an old story. And a nigger too.

But Jack Clinker was in a state when the warden opened the door of his cell

to take him into the white-plastered room beyond. His eyes blazed with a righteous fever.

Jack was in his early twenties. He had smooth, pleasant features, glistening brown skin and lustrous teeth. He wore a blue shirt with white polka dots, open at the neck. It was a nice shirt. His mammy had sent it. She couldn't get up to see him: there was nobody to bring her, and she didn't have railroad or bus fare. He had on the trousers to his good brown suit, the one he used to wear when he went calling Sundays. And he wore those bedroom slippers that Janie, that gal from up the country, had given him that Christmas.

The chaplain reappeared. The warden went on into the death chamber, leaving the minister to fetch the condemned.

Jack's step was jaunty, his head high. The big moment had come. He was talking when he walked in beside the chaplain. He had a lot to tell these white folks.

"Jesus saves. Don't the Bible tell us so? It shore do. All you gen'muns know that, every las' one of you. I was right down in the mouf' till I went to Jesus, and then . . ."

He stopped and looked around the little white room. The warden had brought in some kitchen chairs, and half a dozen men sat around. Of course Sheriff Maddox was there. He was too big for his chair: he sprawled all over it. Deputy Sheriff Hardy was smaller and looked more comfortable in his chair. The warden sat next to them. Then there were two guards and the prison doctor. The electrician was standing by the big raised chair.

Jack looked around, as if expecting to see more people somewhere. But he went on with his speech.

"I'll be on the right hand of Gawd. That's whar' I'll be. It won't be long

nuther. Jes' a little while now. Gawd the Father. Praise Him! I wants to tell you gen'muns . . ."

But they were not listening. Sheriff Maddox was talking to the warden.

"There's another lake 'bout eighteen mile below that one," the sheriff was saying. "We get right smart bream there, but not as many bass as we used to."

Jack paused beside the chair, bewildered. They stopped talking and looked at him. He brightened, and went on: "Yassa, I done make my peace. I'm ready to cross Jurdan. He say to me, He say, 'Thy sins, which is many, is forgive thee; go in peace and don' sin no mo'."

He turned to the warden with a sudden apprehension. "Cap'n, you'll send me back home, won't you . . . you know, when they gits all through?"

The warden waved at the county officers. "It's up to them, Jack. I can't do nothin' about it. The State don't appropriate . . ."

But the sheriff said: "We'll see to it, Jack. Don't you worry none."

"Thank'ee kindly, Mr. Maddox. I knowed you wouldn't turn a pore nigger down. It's on'y to please my mammy. I don' keer. I won't be nowheres aroun'. I got a long ways to go. But there's one thing 'bout it, white folks. I'm ready to go. I's done make my peace with Gawd."

He climbed into the chair, talking on. But the white men were not listening to him: they had returned to their talk.

"Bream's pretty good eatin' at that."

"Course it's a damn sight more fun catchin' bass."

"Shore is."

"We got a lake back up here in this county, but it ain't much good."

Jack was silent. The others broke off and looked at him. He tried to resume his speech, but somehow he couldn't. The

room was quiet for a moment. Through the closed shutter of the one little window came a bright point of Summer sunlight. A bird chattered. In the distance a dog barked and somebody shouted something. A truck rumbled along the highway.

The warden, with a backward glance in the direction of his house, pulled out a ponderous gold watch. It was only a quarter past eleven. "Go ahead, boy," he said indulgently. "Get it offen your chest. Say all you want. We got plenty time."

Jack tried. "Well, it's jes' like I say, gen'muns. I . . . I . . ."

His words trailed off into mumbling. He seemed to have lost his voice. Anyway it didn't matter: the white men were chatting again.

The warden nodded to the two guards, and they got up. Deftly they put a soggy sponge on Jack's head, placed a leather contraption over it, hiding his face, strapped him to the chair, adjusted the electrodes. It was all a matter of seconds. The electrician took his place at the switch. The warden raised his hand.

Jack Clinker spoke with an effort through the grotesque headgear.

"Goo'-by, Mr. Maddox."

"Good-by, Jack," grunted the sheriff.

"Goo'-by, Mr. Hardy."

"Good-by, Jack."

The warden's hand was still raised. "Anythin' more, Jack?" he asked.

Jack struggled to say something. But the witnesses were jabbering among themselves again. They were not studying him.

A sob shook him. "Oh, Jesus!" he said faintly. "Jesus, hab mercy . . . hab mercy . . . !"

The warden dropped his hand. The metallic growl of the chair filled the room. Jack Clinker leaped forward against the straps, as if to escape. His wrists turned over slowly.

The men were silent now. Their eyes were fixed on the taut figure in the chair. The brassy monotone—low, penetrating, insistent—was the only sound. The men fidgeted. It seemed a long time the thing went on, though it was really less than a minute.

Finally the noise stopped. Jack's wrists turned back, and he settled down in the

chair, as if more comfortable now. The doctor leaned over him.

The casual voices drifted back into conversation.

"Well, you'll have to come down and try out them bream."

"I'd like to."

"Maybe the bass'll take a notion to bite."

"You can't never tell."

JACK'S

BY BENJAMIN DECASSERES

JACK's, at Forty-third street and Sixth avenue in New York, was for thirty-five years the most celebrated all-night booze playground in America. It opened in 1891 and closed in 1926.

I was myself a practitioner there for twenty-six years. I was in the place oftener and for longer hours than I was either in my furnished room or at the *Herald* office. Well, why not? Like hundreds of others who called Jack's home, I ate, drank and often slept there. When John Dunston opened the house he threw the keys away. Once, when he was closed temporarily for three months between the hours of 1 and 6 A.M. for a nasty row, he had to have new keys made to lock up. One of his chairs was bed and board to a lot of us. The ordinary sessions lasted from ten at night to noon the next day, with intermittent naps.

Jack's had no duplicate anywhere in New York, for there was no music, no cabaret, no clock, no dancing: just good, low-priced food and drinks morning, noon and night, and a moving and continuous parade of novelists, artists, prizefighters, judges, newspaper men, scientists, business men, politicians, soldiers, Governors, Senators, actors, Presidents-to-be (Roosevelt, Taft and Wilson used to dine and wine there), mayors, revolutionists, gamblers, the most opulent madames (and the most eminent of their parasites), labor leaders, song writers, racetrack touts, and wine agents.

Jack himself told me in 1918 that he had \$90,000 worth of unpaid checks in his safe. Paradoxically, that's what made him and the place. He knew you had to come back to his store, for after 4 A.M. there was no other place to go—that is, no place that was not a mere bar and where you didn't have to knock on the door. Jack's was a walk-in. All ages were on exhibition, from the bawling young generation with its first jag—the nurslings and yearlings of Good Mother Booze—to the most venerable, viscid, vacuous, bowed, bent, spent, rheumy, rubbishy old gaffers that you can imagine.

At four o'clock in the morning Barnum's three calliopes would have sounded like a flea's sneeze in this tempest of tosspots. Many were carried from the field by Jack's privy councillors, and many more were propelled none too lightly into Sixth avenue by the famous Flying Wedge, a right-angle-triangle with six of Jack's waiters constituting the side-lines and the offending client the hypotenuse. Six A.M. was *siesta* time for the newspaper men, artists, song writers and actors. The monied aristocracy had practically gone by then, and only the gamblers and a few stray Jezebels remained to watch over the sleep of copy-readers, reporters, proofreaders, ham Hamlets, Broadway Mozarts, and others of Jack's *illuminati*.

Presiding over this happy restaurant was the aforesaid John Dunston. He was physically and psychically a part of his kitchen, his bar, his oyster counter. He

had his apartment on the second floor of the Forty-third street wing. (The house formed a perfect L.) It was his personal, and sometimes loud, supervision of everything that made the place. He walked from table to table every evening inquiring about your food: "Is it just right?" "How is the beer?" "Is your wine as you wish it?" Sometimes he sat at the cashier's wicket, which surveyed three rooms and part of the fourth. He always seemed blossomy. Tall, distinguished looking, with cheeks ruddier than his friend Tom Lipton's in the latter's prime, wearing a heavy military mustache which, like his hair, turned to a silver gray in his latter years, always in evening clothes after 6 P.M., a white flower in his coat, Jack Dunston would have been observed anywhere.

I made my hit with him 'way back in 1902 when I told him he ought to be Ambassador to the Court of St. James. I slyly entrenched myself still deeper on the credit side of his books when I hailed him as Sir John. He was the only Irish Catholic I ever met who was proud to be taken for an Englishman. During the war he actually denounced the Irish rebellion. He was well grounded in history and religious matters and I have spent hours with him in verbal wrestling matches. Like his colleague, Joel Rinaldo, he liked to sit with the stewed literati. He had the Irishman's nimble wit. It was dangerous to fence with him, for he had a memory like a tax-gatherer's. Deep in his cups, just before he went to sleep he was sometimes handy with his fists. It was generally nothing more than a love-tap, but I was told by the venerable Frank Ward O'Malley that one night back in the 90's Jack reached John L. Sullivan at the pivot of the jaw while both were in liquor and that John L. rolled on the floor, bellowed like a baby

and then hulked out. Jack was always in high fettle. He swore by something he called Cockles' English Pills. He gave me one once. It was a compressed Vesuvius.

II

He was born in Cork in 1853. He came to America via the Canadian route, bringing with him the municipal air of Cork, "McCarthy's Daughter," a corrosive chant which he always sang for the boys when he got corned. It was the only music ever permitted in his place. He would weep while singing, for McCarthy's daughter, according to the saga, got the raspberry from some white-collar Kerry man and destroyed herself in the River Lee. We *savants* and pundits always rose respectfully while Jack intoned this frightful tale—mainly because we were all in the deep red in the big book under the desk.

The first job that he got in New York, according to the record at the Hall of Fame, was that of waterboy at the Old Fifth Avenue Hotel. This was during the Grant administration and Grant himself used to put up at the hotel when he came to New York. "Twice," Jack once told me, "I was waterboy at his table—do you get it? *Water-boy* at General Grant's table! Why, I was of no more use than a tooth-pick to a hen!"

The next we hear of one of New York's greatest benefactors he was a partner in Dunston & Kennelly's Manhattan Oyster Bay, at Seventy-fourth street and Columbus avenue. This was as far north as any cruising rummy ever got in the 80's. On a clear day you could see the aurora borealis by standing on the bar-rail. Tom Healy—afterward the owner of Healy's restaurant at Sixty-sixth and Broadway—was one of the waiters. All three men—Dunston, Healy and Kennelly—died millionaires.

In 1891, with Kennelly and Tim Hurley, Jack opened the Manhattan Oyster House at Sixth avenue and Forty-third street. The opening made some noise throughout the then free and happy Republic. Its salient event was the wedding breakfast of Frank Jay Gould and Helen Kelly. This was the beginning of the House that Jack Built. However, somewhere between Seventy-fourth and Columbus avenue and Sixth avenue and Forty-third he had been head-waiter transiently at a place almost as famous as his own. This was Sam Burns's restaurant and boozery three blocks further up Sixth avenue. There is a tale that Sam fired Jack after a row and that Jack said, "Some day I'll buy this place over your head." Twenty-four years later he bought it for \$225,000. This Irishman, in fact, never had any bad luck in his life. Curious how God loves the vendors of booze! They are blessed beyond all men.

The most curious and esoteric property of Jack was his apostolic blessing. When he came toward you two fingers on his right hand were raised just over your head if you were sitting. But watch his face closely! The blessing might precede the statement that your credit account was closed until you put a five-spot on your last add-up. Or it might mean, "I extend to thee the limit." With a waiter standing alongside your chair it might mean "We desire to be relieved of this man's presence. Wedge!" If the arm was raised at an angle of forty-five degrees it meant "I am going to sit with you." To the inmates of Jack's his fingers were veritable fingers of Fate.

There were six keys to Baldpate and four doors to Jack's. Three were on Sixth avenue and one was on Forty-third street. The three Sixth avenue doors entered different rooms. Every old Jacobin will recall the importance of this seemingly trivial arrangement. Put out of one door, the

offender would walk around the block, get a shave and a shine, brush his hair, sometimes buy a little malacca cane, and an hour afterward he would come in, all snapped up, through another door, take a seat, order an ale and smoke up. The waiters in the room wherefrom he had been catapulted seldom discovered that he was now in another room, passing idle quip and jaunty quiddity and oiling up for another bounce. Ah! how often I have played that delightful game!

However, members of the newspaper guild were never, or seldom, flying-wedged. When they had to be expelled there was great pomp and ceremony and no laying on of hands: the uniformed coat-boy, still hoping against hope for a tip; full canonicals for the forced exodus of "lettered men," as Jack called us in his o'er-ripe satire. Full canonicals and fanfare—but into the street!

The quality of Jack's food and drink was famous. And at what prices! He was one of the few Irish hosts in New York who knew how to keep and serve German beers. His scrambled eggs and Irish bacon (the 5 A.M. dish of the gay all-nighters) were perfect. His Manhattan sirloin steak, with all the fixings (and what a whopper of a steak!), for sixty cents—you remember? Put a bottle of Bass' ale (thirty cents) on top of it and you had set sail for all cosmic and comic ports.

His twenty-cent brandy was the best at that price I ever tasted. I used to pick rainy nights for brandy. (Beer for women, wine for men and brandy for the gods, said old Sam Johnson.) With John O'Brien of the *Herald* (who could twist his long legs so corkscrewy around the legs of the table that to remove him the waiters had to take the table with them), I have passed sessions on Jack's brandy until our combined luminosity burned up our bar-checks.

III

O'Brien, who was variously known as Jack O'Brien, Oby, Spanish O'Brien, Mexican O'Brien and Tom, was one of my cronies in Jack's for years. I first met him in the City of Mexico. He was a man of many talents and languages. A Parisian by birth, educated at the University of Edinburgh, he loathed all forms of sham and hypocrisy. Pointing one of his long, bony fingers one night at some fat-faced business smugmug, he said: "I loathe those men who will never admit they have been drunk! I have been boisterously, stupidly, weepingly, dancingly, singingly, brilliantly, asininely, triumphantly, morosely, pugnaciously drunk a thousand times. My kidneys have wrecked whole breweries. My gullet has swallowed whole distilleries." I hallooed my approval. Arthur Leonard Ross voted his oke. Frank O'Malley and John Barrymore conducted the fragment of the Respectable Element to the door. It was upon this very night and date, children, that Corse Payton slept on his planked steak.

My stomach and my gullet have palpitant memories of some of Jack's dishes—creamed chicken-hash with sliced green peppers and small onions, in a chafing-dish, enough for two, seventy-five cents! The tremendous murphys with a fat wad of butter stuck in their entrails that you got free with your steak! Those kidney stews, piping hot, with a foaming seidel of Pilsner, fifty cents!

But, above all, Jack's was noted for its sea-food. It began as an oyster and lobster house and always remained so, primarily. No matter what you ordered, a dish of oyster crackers and a sauce of piccalilli was set before you. Jack took great pride in his fish. There was a special oyster-bar, presided over by an Italian who was known to everybody as Caruso. Those monstrous Lynn Havens!

There were football nights in Jack's when the Princeton, Yale and Harvard rowdies invaded the place. What souse cantatas there were! The brandied hiccough met the hooligan howl of the highball, and the beer belch mingled with the hoarse roar of the rickey. There was a fight a minute, and the Flying Wedge was kept busy flinging these students of Homer by the hundreds clear across Sixth avenue and up against the doors of the Hippodrome. The uproar sometimes was so great that it roused the denizens of Frank Case's sedate Algonquin, around in Forty-fourth street. They would pour out in nightgowns, nightcaps and berettas, believing that some great catastrophe had overtaken our quiet city.

The college intellectuals were picked up on the sidewalk by the fleet of hansom cabs, with their high-hatted Irish drivers, which lined the whole block in front of Jack's after 12 P.M. I'm happy to report to the boys and girls of today that these Harvardians, Princetonians and Yalensians were frisked to a whisper by the cabbies before they got back home. A finer set of thugs, blackguards and drink bilkers than those college boys I've never met. Jack never wanted them, but he could not get rid of them. On one of the football nights Boies Penrose (Harvard) was present. Ach! Ach!—but that's another story.

In those days the wine agent was the Biggie of Broadway. He was always thought of as a Cræsus. He was followed everywhere by a gang of picaroons, yes-smirkers, rakehells, Doll Tearsheets, and other *pediculidæ*. Necks craned and knees crooked when the king of them all, George Kessler, entered Jack's in high hat and full regalia, with something red slashed across his shirt front which signified that he was

O.K. with the Shah of Persia. Jack always welcomed him at the door with a military salute, for the awesome words were always telephoned ahead, "George Kessler's on the way!"

Black-bearded and tall, Kessler enjoyed the His Majesty stuff immensely. He was conducted to a seat by Jack, who himself took his order. We underlings of the pen and brush held our breath bated, for we were soon to hear from our waiter, "Mr. Kessler would like to know, gentlemen, whether you will wine with him." Ah!, those magnificos! Those Kesslers, Wally Murphys and Garners—the *pur sang* of the Booze Dynasty, the Castilians, the Samurai of Thirst! *Ave! et de profundus!*

Comedy! No end of comedy. Like Mouquin's and Joel's, Jack's was a Temple of the Absurd. This one has stuck in my head after twenty years: two young fellows, both Vere de Veres, and both lushy, got jammed in the narrow door which led to Uncle Daniel Murphy's washroom. After a few mutually mumbled apologetic words one said, "Well, anyhow, I can see you are a gentleman." "No," said the other one, "I don't think I am a gentleman." "But you are—I know a gentleman when I see one." "I don't think you do—for I'm not a gentleman." "You insinuate I am a liar? —I say you *are* a gentleman."

Immediately the one who accused the other of being a gentleman had the throat of the one who insisted he was not a gentleman. Jack stepped up hurriedly to the scene, and in his kindest and most drippingly Gaelic tones said, ripping them apart, "I believe you are *both* gentlemen." Then suddenly changing from a treacle soprano to a fog-horn bass he thundered "Wedgel!"

So the Flying Squadron landed the two epicenes on their roundhouses out in melancholy Sixth avenue.

This Uncle Daniel Murphy, who tended to the sick and wounded in the gents' washroom, was the best known person in Jack's next to Jack himself. Jack had imported him from Halifax when the house was opened. He was as much a part of it as the keyless door. He was one of those little old shrunken men who by no stretch of the imagination could you ever imagine having been born a baby. He was like that old fellow in Balzac's "The Magic Skin," the fellow who sold the ass' skin to the hero. He lived in his little atelier; he died there. He had towelled and chinned with more famous men than probably any other person in the country.

He remembered them all. He was a chatterer *de luxe* who for thirty years withered away in a toilet-room. He had tidied up Roosevelt, Wilson (when he was a Princeton professor Woodrow used to go to Jack's), Taft and Prince Henry of Prussia, beside a list of dukes, marquises, Prime Ministers, authors, Senators, Governors and what-not that would make a who's who of the travelling world from 1891 to 1922, when he keeled over. Uncle Dan'l was well beloved by all. He was known as the Privy Councillor. And he pouched a small fortune. He was only once angry past the forgiving point. Then his anger was directed at Frank O'Malley, who sent the page-boy into his domain to page Cardinal —.

On a certain morning four of us gave an exhibition in the middle room (which was variously known as the Café, the Psychopathic Ward, Matteawan and the Strait-jacket) which drew all the *boozewahzie* from the White, Green and Gold rooms. Tom Geraghty, then a reporter on the *Herald*, rolled up his sleeve and balanced two full ponies of brandy, one on top of the other, on his elbow. Andrew Mack held a gin rickey on his protruding tongue.

Hype Igoe planted a glass of ale on his nose. And I did my stunt of standing two seidels of beer on my head, one on top of the other. We had held them there for ten minutes when Mack's glass crashed. Jack was fortunately absent.

Hype Igoe, one of the noblest playboys of those gorgeous days, put music into Jack's. Hype had been brought up on the ukulele. He always had one hidden on him somewhere. Well, we—Hype, Tad, John O'Brien, Tom Geraghty, George Luks, Fornaro, Jack Francis, Stuffy Davis, Wilson Mizner, and who else?—would wait for Jack to go upstairs to bed, generally about 5 A.M. Then we would assemble under the steps in the Gold Room, and Joe Nincompoopulous, from the cellar, would bring up Hype's uke. He stored it in the fishbin at a dollar a week. Hype would always start with "Ten Thousand Sheep" and then go into "How deee-lightful to be m-m-m-married!" Drinks! Drinks! Drinks! By 6:30 we were in full cacophonic blast. Jack, trying to sleep, never dreamed that this "music" came from his place. He put in a complaint against some neighbor in Forty-fourth street.

Alas!—one day Jack found the uke in the fishbin and smashed it. But he died without knowing whose property it was. Besides, Hype always had another uke.

One of the reasons for Jack's success was his strict order about the sexes mixing. He had an inflexible rule that no woman with a man could leave her table and sit at another man's table without her man accompanying her. This, no doubt, prevented many murders. Another rule was that no unescorted women were permitted in the place after 9 P.M. Of course, some of the girls used to get there at 8:50 and squat. "Oh, we're waiting for Freddy Gebhart," was their wheeze even after the

frisky Freddy had passed away. What could be done?

But after 3 A.M. the newspaper men had to be entertained, so three women were permitted to come in unescorted—the Old Gray Mare, Salammbo and Cock-Eyed Dolores. (Jack knew we had no class.)

At that time in the morning the high gamblers—Lou Betts, Arnold Rothstein, Verney Barton, etc.—also used to come in with their beautiful molls all bedizened and bedecked like a Maharajah's harem. The men of the brush and pen were sometimes permitted to stew around with these morning *débutantes*. The gamblers had great respect for the Power of the Press, even when the Power was only half a horse. Arnold Rothstein, who came into Jack's every morning, was one of the most delightful beer companions with whom I have ever sat out a session. He impressed me as being a great executive who simply took the easiest way in a country where craft and graft are all ye need to know.

IV

Jack's waiters—Irish and German—followed him from his first stake and steak. They grew old and gray in his service. They were of the white-aproned, hello Mikel type. Broke? They'd pay your check if you were in too deep at the desk. Want a fiver? Sure! If you were good to them, they'd protect you to the death against the onslaught of some muscleinsky.

There was Tom Dunne (Dunney), who was old beyond guess in 1900 and still old (he couldn't get older) in 1918. He was Jim Huneker's favorite waiter. Tom read all of Huneker's articles in the *Sun* and the *Times*, and was mighty proud of the Cardinal, as he called Huneker. One morning I heard him say confidentially, "That was a great dish of words, Cardinal, you

cooked in last Sunday's *Times*!" Then there was Joe, the literary waiter, who nearly lost his job through inattention to orders the night his Elohim, Jack London, sat at his table. Joe's favorite line to any customer who looked at all like a book-lover was, "Have you ever read 'Peveril of the Peak'?" He was an advocate of hot milk stews three times a day for brain-workers.

There's a parade in my mind; but it would take a book to describe what I see going past: A Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina—a dry—sleeping off a jag on top of Jack's fishbin in the cellar; the historic battle between Freddy Gebhart and Louis Tiffany in which Freddy lost a diamond pin, and how it was found eighteen years later; introducing Jack Francis to a plaster contractor from Westchester as Wanamaker's son, Jack promising this plastered plasterer a contract, by appointment, to replaster both of Wanamaker's stores from top to bottom, while the plasterer made the corks pop for the newspaper bunch; telling Jack in about 1908 that I would some day lead an orchestra in his place—Jack's unprintable answer—and how in 1928, remembering my promise made twenty years before, I mounted the orchestra loft in the Golden Room, the only part of Jack's left, which was now a restaurant run by his son, gave five dollars to the orchestra leader to give me his baton, and led the orchestra while I shouted "Me voilà, Jack!" (Jack had then been dead two years); the government of the United States in 1922 putting back into Jack's cellars \$90,000 worth of liquors seized in an illegal raid on his apartment while the trolley cars stopped and New York stood by on roof and in window in open-mouthed amaze; Brooklyn Jimmy Carroll and his letter from John L. Sullivan that had dropped into every cesspool, beer glass

and soup-mess for twenty years; the smearing with thick mustard of the sword-pommel of a Belgian general during the war and our retiring to carefully prepared tables behind the lines to watch him rise and caress it; George Kaucher, of the *Times*, going home with Berry Wall's high hat; Ed Simmons, the painter, paying off two years' accumulation of checks by painting twelve wall-panels in the White Room depicting the adventures of Little Red Riding Hood; the evening the Salvation Army set up its heavenly minstrel show before Jack's and a hopelessly saved lassie stepped out of the band and sprinkled a demonifuge on the threshold to the bar-room; my nightly feasts of the eye on O. O. McIntyre, the sartorial Mardi Gras, with his green-and-gold vest and his cheetah, iris, nacre, cerulean, fulvescent, erubescant, glaucous ties, the while he spilled his Faustian principles of life into the Eustachian tubes of Herbert Bayard Swope; the ride up to Jack's from Brooklyn Bridge in a hansom cab with John O'Brien—John offering the cabby a dozen eggs which he was taking home and I a poem I had just written in payment—and what happened; Johnny Hughes, the famous Hoffman House cabby—bringing an expensive poodle into Jack's that some fellow had paid him to take care of for several hours—Johnny falls asleep—we slip the dog from the leash and tie frankfurters to the chain—Johnny going out woozy, dragging the frankfurters.

Tyl Eulenspiegel was alive in New York in those days!—and he reigned in the Kingdom of Folderoll

When Jack died the New York *Times* ran an editorial on the man and his place. The title was "Jack of Jack's." It said: "Jack's will become a legend unintelligible to a country forgetting the days and nights of civilized food and drink."

DIAMONDS GOING BEGGING

BY JAN HALLETICH

EVEN at the height of America's colossal coining of cash with Cal, the 35,000 jewelers of this country wept that prosperity must have been with two other fellows. They said that people weren't buying precious stones any more, despite the fact that the general sales resistance had been so magnificently broken down. They blamed, for the meagreness of their trade, such phenomena as the Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924, the Prohibition plague, the motorcar craze, the spread of hold-ups and smuggling, the real estate boom, and the stock market psychosis.

As to the immigrants: Before the war, the luckies among them all manifested their new American opulence by buying diamonds for their wives. For in the old country, a diamond, however small and blemished, was the most generally accepted sign of prosperity. In the old country, one labored in fields or factories for many years before being able to buy a small diamond for the wife, if, indeed, by that time she wasn't too old to warrant it or didn't need a tombstone rather than a ring-stone. The peasants of those ancient lands saw gems mostly on the great bosoms of their landlords' women, on the pudgy fingers of officials, or on the crosses of their priests.

But in America, a jeweler's affable agent came to the tenement and, in the immigrant's own language, offered a genuine diamond for only a dollar or even

for only fifty cents a week. The many weeks of payment went by fast enough. The wife showed off the stone in a brooch or a ring. A photograph was sent back to the old country. The photographer knew his business; the brooch was as prominent on the picture as the sitter's bosom. But the Acts of 1921 and 1924 diked the influx of such customers, and thus killed off a goodly section of the American jewelry business.

Next, in deadly effect if not in chronology, came Prohibition. In the old days, happy spenders at the legitimate bars or at champagne-glass littered tables loved to be conspicuous, admired, envied. They gaudily exhibited stones of price in their ties, rings, and watch-rims, and on their ladies. But then came the night club and the speakeasy, and it was now dangerous to knock on the concealed doors with a bejeweled fist, or to present one's be-diamonded bosom or tie to a gorilla's eye. True, an evening gown and a stove-pipe hat could still be sported safely, for such ornaments might mean nothing but four-flushing. But diamonds and other jewelry had better be kept at home, away from the gangsters' eyes. And what was the use of owning diamonds when you couldn't display them?

Thus, with old heirlooms sent to the already stagnant mart, not much new jewelry was bought by the newly rich. Some of the bootleggers and racketeers, to be sure, were inclined to invest their gains

in stones, but this new demand did not compensate the jewelers for the loss of the immigrant trade and the old steady custom of Pittsburgh and points west. The new underworld moguls mainly followed the older rich in their fear of drawing too much of the blackjackers' attention. The less sparkling the well-heeled American was in appearance, the surer was he of his life.

What few customers there were, were coralled by unscrupulous jewelers who quoted bottom prices. These bargains were stolen or smuggled stones. The government levied a 20% duty on all imported diamonds (cut and polished). So smuggling was profitable and widespread, notwithstanding the spy work and reward system of a national association of respectable jewelers. Among the smugglers there were the most unsuspected persons of the most ingenious methods. Once, an intellectual who had lost a leg in the slaughter for Demos came to see me. I had known him as a serious student of philosophy.

"Look," he pointed to his wooden leg, "what customs man would think of searching my leg for diamonds? Can your boss use me as a smuggler?"

I replied that the vice of my boss was kiting checks, not smuggling stones. The visitor sighed, chatted amiably about John Dewey's latest book, and hobbled away to some other diamond office. I understand that he now has a good job in social work.

Then there was the automobile. The clothiers had complained of it, and now the jewelers joined the chorus. Driving and car-tinkering called for old clothes, and, similarly, for less or no jewelry on one's hands, ties, and belly. There were two reasons: comfort of movement when at the wheel or changing the tire, and less danger when crossing the slums or steppes

of America. A gimcrack in the tie or on the finger courted a hold-up. Even if the driver got away with his life, the cost of jewelry insurance was up since the war.

And, finally, why sink one's dollars into the frozen assets of insurance-laden, no-interest-bearing jewelry when the American of the prosperous 1920's could play with the same greenbacks in the real estate or stock market, and perchance make some bully profits?

Thus, in the gay 20's the jewelry business of America experienced a steady decline, going the earlier way of beefsteak breakfasts, landaus, and leg-o'-mutton sleeves. It was—and still is—offering a stiff fight to the changing time and manners; it has borrowed desperate tricks from the modern advertising bag; but it was, and is, being beaten just the same.

II

How did I happen on to the diamond scene?

In the Summer of 1922—my second Summer in America—I was an all-around-man in a New York paint store near Chinatown. I sold paints and wallpaper; lugged heavy bags of lime and sand; pumped barrels of crude oil, turpentine, and kerosene. Evenings, I tried to write of my work, my boss and the customers. Davie, the boss, was a young fellow, only two or three years my senior. After store hours he was running around with the girls. He insisted on taking me along on some of these expeditions, for my personal health, as he said, and also to acquaint me with the real America. All this was interesting, but the cold Fall weather set in, and my hands were chapped and bleeding. The store had no heat; Davie said that a stove would be dangerous because of the oils.

I went to see one of my friends, a C. P. A. I showed him my hands. He told me to take a City College course in bookkeeping. The course was dull, the class was huge. I wondered how anything could be learned in such a crowd. I went there every evening but did not dare to take an examination. I returned to my friend without a certificate, but he got me a job anyway. I became bookkeeper in a Maiden lane diamond importer's office.

Davie was sore. "Now ye're goin' to sit on yer fanny," he said, "no exercise, no excitement, no nothin'." But he was wrong. There proved to be plenty of excitement in the four years I was to work for Tramser.

Norman Tramser was tall, dark, of elegant manners, meticulous to the point of nervousness. He was a rich man's son, in his early forties, but as yet bewildered by his decade-old discovery that his father hadn't left him enough money to last all his life. He was a cosmopolite with a hash of several languages, all heavily accented. Even his native Yiddish he spoke as if it were a Franco-German dialect.

He had been born in Warsaw, and raised in Berlin and the French resorts, and was married to a St. Petersburg woman. During the war, they had fled from Antwerp to London, buying a passport for a crazy price; the joke of Maiden lane was that they had actually registered as a pair of Belgian babes. In 1916 they moved to New York, and here a sharp promoter of novelty inventions eased Tramser of his last \$10,000. When I was sent to his office, he was re-entering the diamond business on a shoestring, full of an innocent belief that his riches would come back if only he hired an office, a clerk ("clark," he said in his quasi-London way), and a couple of salesmen ("rock-drummers," said the salesmen).

Tramser came from a jewelering clan and himself had dabbled in diamonds back in Europe. He had many friends among the diamond people of Antwerp and New York. I soon met them, quaint cosmopolites of American citizenship, polyglots, dandies, horsemen and women-chasers, with villas on Long Island and the Riviera fast slipping from their carefully manicured hands, complaining about overproduction in the South African mines yet hurrying into the jungles of Brazil and British Guiana in search of new mines, deriding the bad trade in America yet moving their old Maiden lane offices to the swankiness of Fifth avenue and the Upper Forties, and finally going bankrupt.

Tramser pointed out some of the most picturesque fellows. Here is Joe Goldsmord, thirty years in America, owns a watch-factory in Geneva, seven stores in New York and Chicago, and twenty apartment-houses in the Bronx. Do you know with what money he began? Why, he made oodles running a chain of brothels in Libau, yesmyboy! Or take Sam Kapedarmas, now a respected wholesaler in rubies and sapphires—he worked for Tramser's father as a bookkeeper and absconded to America with sixteen thousand roubles, and that was his start. Van Loe-gen? He got his in San Francisco, as a lad of eighteen, marrying his boss's widow of sixty-odd, the widow politely dying soon after.

A bloody game, said Tramser, even if it looks respectable. Seldom had he a good word for any other dealer, however friendly their relationship seemed to be. The rare good word was: yes, so-and-so is a fine fellow, but he loves diamonds too well, his family has been in this game since the Seventeenth Century; where there is love for the stones there is a lack of business acumen. But this sounded like an

apology for his own ill luck. He, too, loved diamonds uncommonly well, the mere touch and sparkle of them, the task of eliminating pin-points and chips, the re-assorting and re-arranging of the stones.

Tramser's books, originally kept by himself, were so tangled, and at first I knew so little about bookkeeping, that I could not judge whether he had had any initial investment. But he had some diamonds on consignment from Antwerp, and he kited checks from the very start. After a few months I grew bold and remarked that the furious pace of kiting was slaying me. He answered that we weren't alone in this trick, that many other dealers were doing it. It was the only way out, he said, because bank credits, however large, never sufficed to prop up the gigantic business of America.

Tramser was selling diamonds to storekeepers in the sticks. His drummers seldom sent him cash. Even storekeepers' notes, which could be discounted at a bank, were scarce. Most sales were made on open account. A jeweler in Opelousa or Muskegon took the stones and signed, not a note, but the salesman's bill, which signature we could not discount except at an outrageous rate. So, for Tramser and some other diamond dealers, kiting checks was, indeed, the only way out.

There were several methods of doing it. One was this: Tramser would open two accounts in two banks, and juggle his own checks between them. Suppose there was \$2,000 to his name in the Maize Barter Bank, and \$5 in the Second Empire Bank. He would transfer \$1995 from the Maize to the Empire, and pay his creditors with two checks, each for \$2000, one on the Maize, dated today, another on the Empire, dated tomorrow. Thus, instead of \$2005, he had \$4000 to hand out. He figured that his creditors would not try to have

the checks certified, and that the checks would not reach the Maize and the Empire for another day or two or three. His figuring was right, especially since the banks were not strict in those days about checks drawn against uncollected deposits. He thus had a few days' grace, and he used it to muscle around for exchange checks, or friends' favors, as he called them.

This was another, more prevalent method of kiting. Tramser would spend hours telephoning his friends of easy money habits: "Stirson, you give me one thousand till Saturday. I am sending my bookkeeper with my check dated Saturday. Do me a favor. Remember, you did it for me three weeks ago, and I made good." Or: "Van Loegen, I have regards for you from your brother in Amsterdam. Yes, a letter. By the way, can you spare a fifteen hundred till Tuesday? I'm sending over my young man with my check dated Tuesday. No? All right, make it Monday." I ran around, collecting checks, leaving checks, paying creditors, creating new creditors, courting girl-bookkeepers as per Tramser's instructions when the girls ran their bosses. I puffed hard to make dead lines in offices and banks, while Tramser held the helm at the telephone, cajoling his friends.

The race gathered momentum as his obligations rose and the terms of the favors grew shorter. Many a time I thought that on the next first or fifteenth of the month, with payments due to the tune of some \$20,000 or \$30,000, and with Tramser's bank balances *nil*, the crash would surely come. But on the thirtieth or thirtieth Tramser would leave his diamonds, roll up his sleeves, grab the telephone, and behold! his bank balances would swell after the rain of his persuasive words. The marvel of it was that he could keep it up the four years I was with him.

III

The work was the harder because Tramser gave me no vacation. He slaved me even on Saturday afternoons, when everybody else went home, and Maiden lane was cemetery-quiet. That was exactly why we should stay and work, he said, for on Saturday afternoons no one came to plague us with bills or stones. I grumbled, but he bribed me by allowing me to experiment with English composition on the office typewriter in my spare moments. Those moments were scarce, but I used them to the hilt, and for a time I was happy.

But the kiting increased in velocity, and I felt battered and misused, I threatened to resign. Tramser cherished a thorough contempt for my continued inability to tell Blue Jaegers from Yellowish Kimberleys, and for my failure to spot a pin-point or a chip in a stone, even through a lens. He was often fierce with me because I didn't share his passion, though in more reflective moments he half-agreed that jewelry was a barbarism sure to die out when the world goes Socialist. He was faintly liberal every morning after reading Heywood Broun in the *World*, and stood for some astonishingly radical remarks from me. (In fact, when later his kiting brought him to bankruptcy, he threatened his creditors with turning Communist.) But these progressive moments lasted in the morning only. As the day wore on, he became Tory and almost let me resign.

But early in my service I developed a useful memory for the names and credit standing of jewelers in small and middle-size American towns, who were the meat of Tramser's trade. He also noted, with pleasure, that though I learned little about diamonds and cared even less, I could talk about them glibly enough in an emergency, using the jewelers' lingo.

Not that it was especially rich. Curiously enough, considering the Antwerp and Amsterdam origin of the American diamond trade, hardly any Flemish or Dutch words seemed to seep through. But there were many French words, perhaps because French was the official language of Antwerp as well as the tongue of the international nobility, the old-time chief customers of Antwerp and Amsterdam. Petty brokers, running around New York with a few packages of diamonds, or haggling on the John street curb and at the dining tables at Frieda's in Fulton street, were known in the trade as *courtiers*. A diamond of a certain oblong shape was a *marquise*. The smallest stones were called *mêlée*. A packet of stones of uneven sizes was talked of as *mélange*. A diamond necklace was often sold under the name of *collier*. The right French pronunciation of these words was scrupulously adhered to, even in the slummy offices of Canal street.

For monetary conceptions some Hebrew words were used, such as *mitzia* (bargain), *mechulah* (bankrupt), *mazumah* (money), and *mazel berokhah* (an invocation of luck). This last was always pronounced over a deal with piety, even if one of the contracting parties were a Gentile. I knew cases where two Gentiles would half-jokingly, half-seriously say the formula when a package of diamonds changed hands between them.

Coming to English words, large but blemished diamonds were known as *potatoes*. The general slang word, *rocks*, was used quite often by the dealers for all the gems they handled; some diamond salesmen and even dealers called themselves *rock-drummers*. The trade term for old-fashioned hard-to-sell stones was *old-miners*; these were distinguished by their irregular archaic cut, and often by their

yellow color. Small stones were known as *single cuts* (a matter of number and kind of facets); a dealer nicknamed his midget salesman Single Cut, which was considered a good joke, though it was completely lost on outsiders. Stones were called *Jaegers*, *Kimberleys*, and so on, after the mines from which they came.

With this lingo at the tip of my tongue, and with Tramser's code marks on the tiny diamond envelopes, I could tell a convincing story about any stone, though, in fact, I knew nothing about it. Suppose, the code marks were: WJ AP 74-150. A glance at them—and I told the customer that the stone was white, from the Jaeger mine in South Africa, that it was absolutely perfect, no chip or pin-point marring its beauty, that it weighed slightly less than three-quarters of a carat (seventy-four one-hundredths, to be exact), that its price was only \$150 a carat.

I said that Park avenue children cried, not for Castoria, but for White Jaegers, and that the price would soon be on the up and up. I was surprised to find that, with such hollow talk, I could sell a stone, or a whole packet of them, to a trader straying into our office while Tramser was away. Twice, he came in while I was spieling my tale and turning a stone alluringly between the two steel points of my tweezers. He watched with wonder and semi-fatherly pride (yes, he had no children, and insisted on selecting my clothes for me, even though I paid). In the Spring of 1924, he decided to send me on the road, drumming.

Either way, the idea seemed a winner. If I make good, so much the better for the firm. If not, I'd be glad to return to the office and would then surely stop kicking about the kiting and the late Saturdays. So said Tramser as he gave me \$150 for a ticket to California, and another \$150 for

my expenses the first month. A 2% commission on my sales was to build up my personal fortune, if any. California, Oregon and Washington, from the Mexican border to the Canadian line, were my territory.

IV

On the road I carried diamonds and emeralds, worth some \$50,000, in two longish wallets concealed in two low pockets in the lining of my coat. They ruined several suits in the course of a few months. In my brief-case, I carried a scale, a package of carat weights, a lens, an assortment of tweezers and pincers, bill-books and rating-books. With my free hand, now and then, I was to feel the bulging ends of the coat, to make sure that the wallets were still there. The gesture became mechanical; I was cursed with it for a long time after I quit diamond-drumming.

Back in the year and a half of my Maiden lane experience I witnessed two hold-ups and was a victim of one. By the latter I mean that though I wasn't held up, I missed a beautiful silver fountain-pen after a detective, searching our building for the yeggs, brushed too closely past me. Tramser told me that on the road I would be in constant danger of a stick-up. He gave me many rules to be followed at the mere suspicion of being shadowed.

In the third week of my travels, I came to Taft, a booming oil town in California, full of tough men and easy girls. I sold a bill of stones to the owner of a wooden shack doing a land-office business in jewelry. A man of a gambler's type, which I thought existed in fiction only, eyed me and my stock as he bought a heavy gold watch from the jeweler's son. All through the late afternoon and early evening I noticed that the stranger was following me around the town. I just couldn't lose him.

When he trailed me to the garish lobby of my hotel I pictured a hold-up with myself as the blood-bespattered victim. So I wheeled around, got a strong shoe-box from an obliging porter and reached the postoffice five minutes before closing time. I mailed the shoe-box, with my diamonds inside, to my own address in Los Angeles. When I turned around, the unwelcome shadow was still there. I smiled: let him hold up the postoffice and shoot the clerks, but not me! The stranger looked at me wryly, then at the postal clerks. But the registry partition in Taft bristled with guns. The stranger walked off.

The rule imparted to me by Tramser was: if held up, don't resist, but hand over the diamonds, for Lloyd's will pay the insurance anyway. If there is a suspicion that one is being followed, mail off the diamonds or have them locked up in the hotel safe. Let the yeggs shoot it out with the postoffice or hotel clerks but not with you. It wasn't my life that Tramser wanted to safeguard. He simply knew that when diamonds were stolen from a postoffice or hotel vault, Lloyd's seldom questioned the reality of the robbery and paid the insurance with no hitch and delay.

There was another source of worry for Tramser: the girls who frequented the drummers' hotel rooms. The rumor was that the disappearance of a diamond wallet was occasionally traced to these ladies of joy. Tramser's two road-veterans, Robinson and Graham, told me wonderful tales of their amours in the sticks, how easy, swell, and really safe it was. You didn't have to hunt for a girl, they said. The hotel clerk would just catch your eye and nod, and presto! a ravishing jane would soon be in your room, so ravishing and yet so high-class that you would never dare approach her on the street or in a public place. Such beautiful girls, it appeared,

were held in reserve for the aristocracy of the peripatetic profession: diamond and fur salesmen, traveling bank examiners, and revivalists.

I was in my dawny twenties and more than vaguely interested in this aspect of diamond-drumming. But nothing ever happened to me. Hotel clerks would look at me, but they made no hints or offers. After a while I guessed that my studious eyeglasses and general no-gay-dog appearance discouraged them. I let it go at that, especially since a day's work turned out to be much more tiring than I had expected: the weary miles from store to store; the haggling and talk with the storekeepers; the nervous fear, first for my life and wallets, then for sales. I wanted no further tax on my strength and nerves, girls or no girls.

The talk in the stores was much more than I had ever bargained for with Tramser. Most of my territory was off the beaten trail; salesmen's visits were rare—one or two a day—; and the storekeepers wanted to talk, particularly to a foreign-looking and sounding New Yorker. They had much time on their hands and a sprightly interest in a surprising range of themes. Many of them were versatile men, jewelry being not the only line with them. Some practiced general pawning, others were clothiers, haberdashers, furniture-men, booksellers or stationers on the side. In a town near Seattle I found a jeweler who was also a newspaper editor, and in another town coffins greeted my sight beyond a jewelry showcase: the jeweler proved to be also quite a successful undertaker.

The talk was on anything from golf to politics, and from real estate to religion. In a little California town, in a dingy store behind the railroad tracks, I saw an old jeweler reading the *Truth Seeker*. An atheist? You bet, said the ancient, an athe-

ist and damn proud of it, if you don't like it get the hell out of here. That's fine, I said, I come from a godless country. At once, we settled down to a long soul-talk, resulting in the sale of some *mêlée* stones, even if the old man had practically no trade, what with his poor location and his immoral views.

Many store-men began with questions about New York and Antwerp. They hated New York, but were fascinated by it, as by something totally un-American. They were sure, by my foreign looks, that I came from Antwerp. When I said that I had never been there they were disappointed, and my sales suffered. In a hurry, I got some books on Antwerp and its diamond industry, and soon was rolling off descriptions and statistics aplenty. My sales improved.

But talk of Russia, even in the pre-Plan days, was a favorite with them. There were numberless questions on the Czar's jewels, on the riches of the Urals, on Russian platinum, so expensive since the war, and on just Russia—as soon as I let it be known that I had been there during the Revolution. Was it true that Lenin was a Jew? What chances were there for a good Rotarian to open a jewelry shop in Moscow? The gem business was bad in America, and the June graduation-wedding and Christmas seasons could no longer rescue the rest of the year; therefore, several backwoods jewelers wanted to arrange, through me, for staggering concessions from the Soviets.

Less naïve was the offer of a Los Angeles diamond wholesaler. He wanted to organize a group of Western jewelers, and induce the Soviet government to exhibit the ex-Crown jewels in Hollywood. His group would foot the transportation and insurance bills, and the Soviets might sell some stones to Hollywood stars. The stars, he

explained, would welcome any court action directed against them by the former owners of the stones. It would be so much publicity to them, and so much profit to the jewelers.

In the same California, in a town famous for its olives and gold-mines, a jeweler mysteriously asked me to his house and showed me small yellowish and reddish stones. He said they were diamonds found right there, the only place in North America where diamonds could be mined in commercial quantities. There used to be a mine right outside the town, he said, but strange bankers bought out the controlling interest and shut it down. They represented the famous London syndicate ruling the South American diamond industry, even though they denied it, yes sir! Would I take these samples with me to New York and try and interest some financiers, thus freeing the American jewelers from the machinations of London and South Africa? No, I replied after a moment's meditation, I knew practically nothing about diamonds even if I sold them, and there wasn't a single financier in my diary.

Thus I found business of a kind I was not looking for. In Longview, on the Columbia river, an artificial dream-town built on a grand scale by a magnate lumberman, I tried to sell stones to the owner of a marble-front plate-glass store looming queerly against the background of virgin forest. The jeweler, in response, tried to make me hold his sack, offering me some lots he had bought on the fir-lined plazas. In Tacoma, a jeweler took stones from me on memo, *i.e.*, to see whether he couldn't sell them in a day or two. When I returned he asked for more time. I smelled trouble and, indeed, learned that he had pawned my stones to get the ready cash he so badly needed. That beat even Tramser's kiting.

I had a bad time getting the stones back, and almost raised a turnip, as the trade term has it—that is, I nearly took from the man a note that was patently no good.

I was sore, but in the next town a jeweler's wife took a liking to me, begged me to quit drumming, and suggested that I marry a girl friend of hers and settle down in the town. This soothed my low spirits, but I declined the offer. In some of the smaller towns I was invited by the jewelers to homey dinners, I was shown infants and was expected to fondle them as if I were a visiting relative or politician. Once I was arm-hooked to a school pageant on a sweet-smelling lawn, and another time to an Abe Lincoln drama in a Chautauqua tent. I discovered small, pleasant towns with an all-American population, descendants of New Englanders of the covered wagon tradition, not a foreign face in the stores and streets.

But by that time I was pretty well tired of the incessant travel. I was being prodded constantly by Tramser, who would not allow any of his drummers to stay in a city more than two or three days. To his wires I replied with complaining and insulting letters, threatening to quit and settle in Portland to a writer's life. He changed his tone. He wired a confession that the office, under the new manager-bookkeeper, was a mess, and would I return to straighten it out? Suddenly, I was homesick for New York. I took the first train East.

In the office, for another year and a half, it was the same old kiting fury. Soon I hated the diamond business, and dreamt of a quiet life in the West. In the late Summer of 1926, I finally and irrevocably quit Tramser and diamonds, and went West. A year later Tramser went bankrupt. The loss to his friends was surprisingly small: only some \$70,000.

V

The other day, in New York, I met Van Loegen. He was as ever tall, dapper, trim, a high-stepper as of old, but he had added a slightly worried glint above his pince-nez, and a few lines around the mouth.

It was our first meeting in nearly six years. He greeted me warmly. I asked him what Tramser was doing. The old boss is a *courtier* now and losing his last pants, answered Van Loegen. And what about Joe Goldsmord? Cheated his partner, escaped to Amsterdam but lost the money he stole, and is clerking now in a diamond cutter's office at a starvation wage. The partner went to prison for a false financial statement. What is Graham doing? Good, honest Graham quit drumming and opened his own office, but couldn't meet the overhead, so he threw himself from a fifteenth-story window. A long string of names and troubles followed. Van Loegen sighed:

"We are all in trouble. The diamond business is hit on the neck worse than ever. You were smart to get out. What do you do, a lawyer?"

"No," I said, "I write for a living."

"Oh yes, you always wanted to do that. And you make a living that way?"

"Yes."

Van Loegen looked at me with respect.

"What magazines do you write for?"

I named them.

"Those highbrow things!" he said. There was less respect in his voice. "I don't read them. Lissen, I'll tell you." He was animated. He placed his hand on my shoulder, as if to show that he was my friend and wanted to tip me off to a bonanza I had overlooked in this business of mine. "Lissen, why don't you write a hot whore novel?"

A HERRING FOR MY UNCLE

BY ALBERT HALPER

MY FATHER came from a family of many sons, but only two of them reached America. Of the others, one took root in faraway New Zealand, another was swallowed up in British South Africa, and two or three more settled down somewhere in Northern and Western Europe. There were sisters, too, but my father lost track of them.

Twenty-two years ago, when I was a very small boy, a letter was forwarded from the Census Bureau at Washington to our home, and when my father opened it, he found it came from his brother Herman, whom he had not seen since they had separated as young men in Europe. The letter came all the way from Wellington, New Zealand, to Chicago, and I remember the excitement it caused in the flat. We looked at the post-mark and saw it had taken six weeks to make the trip.

Uncle Herman wrote that he had arrived in New Zealand a long time ago, after wandering about for a while in Eastern Europe. He said he had married early and now had a large family, mostly girls. He was in the butcher business and was doing fairly well.

He wrote in a large, strong hand and he must have used a pen with a stub point, for the lettering was firm and flowing and fairly marched across the page. All of us crowded around; I jumped up on my oldest brother's back to get a peep at the postage stamps, and the letter was read over many times.

Then something fell out of the envelope, and when we picked it up we found it was Uncle Herman's photograph—a small picture about the size of a post-card, showing his head and shoulders. My father stood looking at the photograph for a long time, then passed it quietly among us. We saw the likeness of a man of fifty, a wide-shouldered fellow with a big, square head, iron gray hair and a heavy mustache. He was a fine looking man, he looked straight at us from the photograph.

"That's Herman," said my father, and took the photograph in his hands again and stared and stared at it. After a while, because he knew all of us were watching, he turned around sharply, blew his nose violently and wanted to know why we weren't eating our supper.

Just before we went to bed, when my father returned from the store, he took the letter out once more and sat in the old rocker in the front room. He was a man who rarely showed his feelings (I speak of his younger days), but the arrival of this letter broke down all his barriers. I slept in a big, hard bed between my youngest and an older brother, and as I lay I could see, by lifting the upper part of my body, that my father was still sitting in the chair; he was rocking gently, holding the post-card in his hands and staring at the picture. The gas-light in the front room flared, making a hissing sound, and my father had to frown a bit because his eyes were just beginning to go back on him.

The next day, after the first excitement died down, my oldest brother was told to take out pen and paper and answer Uncle Herman. My oldest brother, about seventeen then, had just finished an evening course at a business college, and he sat down and wrote a letter to our relatives far away in New Zealand.

At first, my father told him what to write, but after a while he found himself dictating the same words over and over, so at last my oldest brother tore the sheet up and started on another. We sat around in a circle quietly until the letter was finished; then my brother read it over, we all listened, and my father insisted on putting ten cents in stamps on it, so it would be sure to reach New Zealand.

The next day I heard my mother talking to my father. "Why don't you tell Gustav?" she asked. "You haven't seen him for a long time now."

My father started; he had forgotten all about telling his older brother about it, the other one who had also come to America.

So my mother stood in the store while my father got ready to call upon his brother. At the last minute he took me along; I had been wearing a hand-me-down from my bigger brothers, and my trousers were patched on the seat and at the knees. I was about five years old and was very small for my age then, and my pants were always dragging around my ankles. My older brothers once made up a little rhyme about my sloppy appearance, but this has nothing to do with the story.

"All right," said my father, looking at my mother's pleading eyes. "I'll get him a suit, but even an iron one won't last on him."

So I followed him out of the store, keeping a pace behind. We rode the Lake street trolley to Halsted and transferred south to Maxwell street. The big outdoor market

was there and for two dollars my father picked out a suit for me. A tall, skinny merchant argued hotly for a long time and finally, placing the garment against my body to show what a perfect fit it was, he at last convinced my father, who handed over the money.

Then we walked off and I had a hard time carrying the package, because the string was thin and cut into my fingers. I kept thinking of the nickel-plated buttons on the new jacket and made up my mind to spit on them, and then rub, thus working up a better shine.

When we came to a busy crossing I reached up and took my father's hand. Car tracks cut across in all directions, the iron rims of wagon wheels struck the cobbles with a jarring bang. Running southwest was a crowded diagonal street, one of the old Indian trails, which I learned later was Blue Island avenue. But though the streets were heavy with traffic, the neighborhood had a dead and desolate appearance. There were plenty of buildings about—it was an old settlement—, but many stores were empty and there were old chalk marks on the filmy windows.

At the corner we went into a fish-store where my father bought a herring, and when we came out he handed it to me. Now both hands were full and I didn't know what to do. The string cut into one palm while I felt the juice from the herring soaking through the newspaper into the other. Beside this, my nose had just started running. I kept walking fast, my pants dragging, and tried to keep up with my father.

My Uncle Gustav, every time I saw him after that, was fond of telling me how I looked when I came up with the new suit and the herring.

In the middle of the next block we approached a small cigar factory. I stopped

to watch two Cuban men rolling tobacco in the front window, but was called away.

"Downstairs," said my father, and we went down a flight of old wooden steps.

At the bottom, inside, hung long rows of tobacco leaves. There was a small gas-light burning because of the darkness, and the cellar had a damp and musty smell. From a table in a corner some one stood up and smiled our way. It was Uncle Gustav. I put down the package and the herring and wiped my juicy palm against my trousers.

II

"Shake hands with Uncle Gustav," my father said and I stuck my dampish hand out.

I was glad to see my uncle, but I turned my eyes aside. He held my hand for a long time and when I looked up I saw him smiling at my father. His palm was soft and had a gentle sort of pressure to it. Then he smelt the herring and chuckled softly; he knew my father had brought it especially for him.

"You carried it?" he asked.

I rubbed my palm against my pants and nodded.

"Ech, ech," he said and opened up the package.

Uncle Gustav was my favorite relative. He was smaller than my father and did not have my father's broad and robust build, and many times I heard my parents talking together, saying that Uncle Gustav was a very sickly man. He had a short, brown beard and always wore a low, black hat, and now when I recall him I think of a little Jewish rabbi going meekly through a field.

We all sat down at the small tobacco table and Uncle Gustav cut the herring equally into three parts. He watched me

with a smile as I tore into it with my fingers and when I turned to look at him I saw him nibbling gently like a rabbit.

My father cleared his throat, felt his inner pocket, but did not come directly to the matter. He asked his brother how he felt, if he was making more by working piece-work, and when Uncle Gustav started coughing my father looked the other way. He was younger than Uncle Gustav, but because he owned a little grocery and was a healthy fellow he treated Gustav like a younger brother.

"And how is Selma?" asked my father. "Does she still plague you, does she still think I'm hoarding all your savings?"

My uncle began coughing again, placed his handkerchief to his lips and slowly shook his head. Then he turned to me and his little, mild, brown eyes began twinkling. For the hundredth time he asked me how old I was, what I wanted to be when I grew up and he also inquired if I still ran after laundry-wagons. Every time I saw him he asked the same questions, yet they did not bore or grate upon me.

My father cleared his throat again, and frowned. "Herman—I've got a letter from Herman."

Uncle Gustav gave a queer gurgle and for a while could not talk; he began coughing, clutched at his mouth and finally fought the fit down. Looking important, sitting strong and stocky on a packing case, my father brought out the letter, showed the photograph and told his brother all about it. While they talked I wandered around the basement, poking into dark places. I heard the talking and saw that Uncle Gustav was excited and liked the way he sat there meekly near the gaslight. He called to me and began telling me about his brother Herman, how Herman was a devil of a fellow but not so bad at that.

Before we left he pressed a coin into my hand, when my father wasn't watching, and gave my head a pat. He stood there smiling at the bottom of the stairs as we climbed up into the light and for some reason or other I had the feeling that he was crying; he crinkled up his eyes so strangely.

We rode back to the store in silence. Every time my father saw his brother he would feel sad for days afterward. He used to tell my mother that Gustav was the best of all his brothers and yet was weak and ailing and married to a witch.

Later on, when I grew older, I learned my uncle's story.

In Europe Gustav was a student, the scholar of the family. When the break-up came he remained home alone while all the others went their ways. My father went to England and struggled on in London for three years, and because he was having a hard time of it wrote to Gustav to stay at home and finish up his studies.

Then my father came to America, lived in a few cities, tried his hand at several jobs and at last settled down in Chicago just before the Columbian Exposition. He did not hear from Gustav for seven years.

Then one day he received word from him—Gustav was coming to America too. He had been tricked into a marriage, but of course made no mention of it in his letter, and when my father, who knew nothing about it, met Gustav at the railroad station he found his brother accompanied by a small, wiry woman and two children. Gustav stood there smiling meekly. I can picture every detail of the scene: I know the way my father frowns, how he wrinkles up his brows. I know the way my uncle used to smile, the goodness shining from his little eyes. There they stood, my father short and stocky, my uncle small and slight.

My father clears his throat, I know that rumble.

"Gustav," he says, and stands there frowning, scowling at his older brother.

"Ech, Isak," says my uncle, surrounded by his family and the baggage. He still smiles faintly, standing meek and mild.

The immigrants arrived over the Baltimore & Ohio, pulling in at the old Polk street depot. I know that station. It has a wide, smooth floor, old-fashioned arches, and the draught from off the railroad yards whistles into the waiting room.

There they stand, the little woman hard and tight-faced. She knows my father, she was already a widow with two babies when my father left the town. "Selma?" he says and still he stands there frowning.

Then, without another word, he picks up my uncle's bag, turns around darkly and is followed by the woman and her kids. They carry their own bundles; my father will have nothing to do with them.

III

Later on, the truth came out—slowly. One of the woman's relatives gave a small dowry, another promised to take the children, and so a bargain was struck. In the end the relatives of the bride took up a further collection, bought steerage tickets and shipped the whole family over. Selma was older than my uncle and was known as the village shrew, and everybody was glad to be rid of her.

And so my uncle married, and so he came to America. He took a flat a mile away from my father's place and stumbled about the brawling city, trying to learn the language. My father, through a friend, got him a job in a stock-room, but the hours were long and, beside, Uncle Gustav was not a muscular man. Then Selma stepped in. She went sniffing about the city and

finally found a relative who was a cigar-maker, and so Uncle Gustav learned a trade. The hours were long, but there was no heavy lifting to do; he had small, quick hands and in a short time was firmly settled.

All this happened just before the turn of the century, about six years before I was born. My father rarely talks about his brother Gustav now. His hate for Selma was a long time in dying; he never could stand the sight of her. She had the small, sharp head of an alert weasel. She never came over to visit us, but went about the town, telling everybody Gustav was giving a part of the wages he earned at the cigar factory to his brother, stinting his own children, hoarding money in secret. When Gustav came home from work, all tired out, fatigue etched deeply in his face, she used to shrill at him, then stick her bony hands in all his pockets. She bore him no children.

Sometimes, in the long Summer evenings, Uncle Gustav used to come over to my father's store before going home. He worked on a piece-work basis, and if he labored especially hard was able to get off an hour earlier now and then. I remember how they used to stand in the rear of the store, where my father used to keep the big kerosene barrel, their hands clasped behind their backs, not talking much, staring toward the front windows and the street. The structure of the Lake street elevated threw thick shadows into the store and across the way; if one looked through the first row of shelves, one could see the tops of the swaying trees over in Union Park.

Business was always quiet in the evening, and if a customer came in my father used to wait on her, ring up the sale, then go back to stand near Uncle Gustav, his face heavy, his short, strong arms behind his back again. I was too small to under-

stand a lot of things, but I sensed the tragic mood of both of them. It must have been apparent, to an older person, that my father's brother was slowly dying.

And each time, before he left, he'd call me over and shake my hand, giving it a gentle pressure.

"How about the herring?" he would ask me, chuckling softly. "Ech, ech, have you got a little herring in your pocket?"

My father, unmoving in the rear, would stand frowning toward the windows as his brother gave my head a pat and left the store. Working in the cigar-shop, down in the damp of the basement, was the worst thing in the world for Uncle Gustav. To save money he used to bring his lunch along and at noon would go out for a five-cent bottle of pop to wash the dry sandwiches down. The carbonated water caused him to belch for hours, little belches which relieved him but left him weakened. My mother talked to my father about him late at night, but there was nothing my father could do. He himself was a poor man, with a big family on his hands. He couldn't go over to visit Uncle Gustav in the evenings because of Selma, and he was unable to see his brother very often because of the grocery. But my mother used to stand there crying, and in the end, leaving her cooking and her washing, she said she'd mind the store and wait on the trade.

So every few months or so my father went over to Blue Island avenue, and after a while he began taking me along. I believe his brother told him to. We would cross the tangle of car tracks and I would reach up for my father's hand, and at the corner fish-store we would stop to buy a herring. Walking along, keeping a pace behind, the juice would go soaking through the newspaper, until my palm was wet.

"You carried it?" Uncle Gustav would say.

And I'd rub my palm against my pants and nod.

"Ech, ech," he'd whisper and then would open up the package.

Each time I saw him I had grown a little taller. Each time I left him I had the feeling, as we climbed up the stairs into the daylight, that he stood there smiling and crying to himself. My father's face was always set as he climbed the stairs. We came outside, out upon that dead, desolate section near Blue Island avenue, and as we reached the car tracks we had to stop until a line of wagons drew away. The thoroughfare was used by the farmers on their way to the great Randolph street markets and I remember how the horses had prairie flowers in their manes, because coming to market with a great load was something of a festive event. And there were small, bare-footed kids, who sat on top of the heaped vegetables and fruit, and if I hollered one or two of them would throw an apple or a peach my way.

All this while we had been exchanging letters with Uncle Herman in New Zealand. He had some grown-up daughters and they too wrote, sending photographs and asking for ours. So one Sunday afternoon we all went over to a studio on Madison street and had our pictures taken. My father acted strangely about it. He went over to Blue Island avenue a day before and talked to Gustav, and when we were ready to go to the studio, the door opened and Gustav came in, his low, black hat upon his head.

"Gustav wants to send Herman his picture too," my father said, and we all walked the six blocks to Madison street.

In the studio we were posed by the photographer, my father sitting in the front row beside my mother, one fist on

his knee, the other out of sight. My kid brother sat upon my mother's lap and the photographer had to talk soothingly a long time to make him sit quiet and reserved.

When it was all over my father went up to Uncle Gustav.

"You sit alone," he said. "You get a picture taken by yourself."

"Ech, Isak. Why should I do it?"

"I'll pay for it," my father said, and so my uncle posed. He sat there with his low, black hat on and meekly stared toward the camera.

Then we all went from the shop and walked the six blocks home.

IV

A few months after the photographs were sent away we received a letter from New Zealand, a letter with a black border around it. My oldest brother was the first to read it, and did not want to give it to my father. Uncle Herman had passed away while undergoing an operation for appendicitis.

As soon as my father learned the news he closed the store early and came over to the flat. It was Winter time and both coal stoves were going. When he reached the flat we were already finished with our supper and our mother had warned us beforehand not to talk or move around.

My father came home and didn't eat the meal. He stood with his back toward the flat in the kitchen, staring out at the snow in the backyard and the alley and cracked his fingers, one by one. His face was heavy, his eyes were clouded. Later on, he read the letter over and over, slowly and in a quiet way; his lips moved a little, forming the words to himself as he read. Then he took out his brother's photograph and stared and stared at it.

"He was the strongest of us all," he told my mother, and that was all he said.

In the night, once again in the big, hard bed, I raised myself and through the bedroom doorway had a view of the parlor. I was seven years old then. My father rocked gently, working up a sort of rhythm, and as he rocked he whimpered quietly to himself. I could hardly hear it. He sat rocking like that for a long time.

Months later he told Uncle Gustav about their brother's death, but Uncle Gustav had noticed my father's mood and was prepared for the worst of news. They stood at the rear of the store near the big kerosene barrel, not talking much, and when Uncle Gustav left he asked me, so as not to break the habit, if I had a little herring in my pocket; but now I saw that he was really crying, he did not try to hide it as he gave my head a pat.

And three years later Uncle Gustav died. My mother cried the hardest. She cried so much that my father put on a stern and surly look and acted sharp around the flat.

We sat about all evening, my mother with her puffy, reddened face, my father staring dully at the stove.

Then we went to bed, everyone except my father.

And once more, for the third time, I raised my body and turned to look through the doorway toward the parlor. My father was rocking there. His face was stern and heavy, I could see the set muscles in his jaw. He rocked up and back, working up a sort of rhythm, his feet firm upon the floor.

How long he rocked I do not know. I grew tired holding my body rigid and had to rest a couple of times. But I did not go to sleep. I lay stiffened in the dark, listening to the flare of the gas flame in the front room. And pretty soon I heard my father; his whimpering sounded like a kind of humming. I raised my body more.

Now his face was slack and flabby. He was holding Gustav's photograph in his hands and stared and stared at it. The tears were pouring down his face. He moaned softly, one fist holding the picture, the other resting heavy on his knee. I sat up rigid in the dark, between my two sleeping and uncaring brothers, and heard my uncle's voice.

"You carried it?"

I rubbed my thigh under the quilt and nodded.

"Ech, ech," he chuckled and opened up the package.

THE SOAP-BOX

NOTICE

THIS department is free to all. Readers with caveats to file against anything that has appeared in *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*, or with novel and not too depressing plans for the uplift of humanity, or with schemes to sell something and cunning enough to deceive the editors, are invited to cut loose. Queries will be printed, and answers if they come in. *Letters discussing living persons must be signed in full.* Others may bear initials or pseudonyms.

THE PHONOGRAPH

WHERE Mr. Dane Yorke says, in his excellent article, "The Rise and Fall of the Phonograph," in your September issue, that the Victor engineers were unable to create a radio in 1925, he should have added "because of the restrictions imposed by existing patents owned by the Radio Corporation." Otherwise, the impression is conveyed that the Victor engineers were incompetent. My information is that way back in 1925 the Victor engineers actually did produce in their laboratories a radio far superior to anything then on the market, but that it could not be manufactured and sold because of RCA's patents.

I am sorry that Mr. Yorke omitted to say anything at all about the real use and benefit of the phonograph, that is, as a medium of reproducing recorded *music*. In pre-radio days, the phonograph was to the masses what the radio is today: a relatively cheap source of entertainment. But today, with our modern electrical recording and reproduction capable of re-

creating music with almost lifelike fidelity, phonograph records have assumed their proper place in the scheme of things, the only place they should ever have occupied. They have become the means whereby a comprehensive library of the world's great music is being permanently recorded and made accessible to the intelligent minority interested in music and who are thereby enabled to have in their homes the constant inspiration of great music greatly performed. You might be surprised to know that, even in these parlous times, the demand for first-rate records is being well maintained, and that a considerable and growing number of friends of recorded music is firmly and permanently backing their belief in this real service. HAROLD C. BRAINERD
Cambridge, Mass.

THE SCARLET BROTHERS

SOME time ago *THE AMERICAN MERCURY* printed an editorial expressing regret that there was no Communist *bloc* in Congress, and saying that it would make a fine show there, and probably do some good. I agree, but there seems to be no way to set it up, for the Communists are poor politicians, and I can hardly imagine them electing one Congressman, let alone a dozen or more. But if Mr. Hoover (or Lord Hoover, as you call him) had more humor in him, I think he could have a lot of fun by appointing some of the chief Reds to public jobs. I offer ten to one that it would tame them instantly. What most of them are suffering from, I believe, is some sort of complex. They itch to be

somebody, and when they fail as poets, novelists or movie script writers they go into politics. But politics without jobs is like theology would be if there were no Hell.

I offer the suggestion to Hoover without charge. Let him put half a dozen of the head Communists into soft jobs, and he will see them turn into Ramsay MacDonalds before his eyes. Every last one of them will become a Tory, and most of them will begin saying that even more foreign agitators ought to be deported than are thrown out now. Anyhow, it would be interesting to make the experiment. For one, I am tired of hearing about Reds being beaten up by the cops. All the fun has gone out of it.

Knoxville, Tenn. A BRYAN DEMOCRAT

A SHRINE OF CHIVALRY

THE University Club of New York is a model of courtesy. I was one of the early members and I should know.

This is the model that they set for the treatment of ladies. Our lady goes to see her brother, or to speak to her doctor, at the hours she knows they are accustomed to be at the club. As she approaches, the door is courteously opened about eight inches by the uniformed attendant. He asks her business and when she says she wants to see Mr. or Dr. he shuts the door in her face and she has to stand on the steps while Mr. or Dr. is hunted up. Then, however, her troubles are over, for she can walk up and down the street with him or even stand on the steps, provided she does not attempt to cause a riot by entering the club.

I was brought up in Princeton, but I had forgotten that kind of courtesy to women. It appears to be of Sabine origin.

I have resigned from the club.

New York

BOLTON HALL

WE STRIVE TO PLEASE

Now that the *Police Gazette* has ceased publication, the sporting world is deprived of the stimulus and inspiration of what was once its most celebrated trophy, viz., the *Police Gazette* Diamond Belt. It was worn, in its time, by John L. Sullivan and James J. Corbett among pugilists, and by various champions in other fields. If I do not mistake, it was once offered to James Whitcomb Riley, as the champion poet of the United States, but he declined. I suggest that it would be a good idea for THE AMERICAN MERCURY to revive this historic means of honoring professional preëminence. The belt, I believe, usually cost about \$10,000. If this seems too steep an outlay for one magazine to make in the public interest in such hard times, then maybe it will be possible to arrange a collaboration, say with the *New Republic*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, and *Vanity Fair*. Houston, Tex. FRANK I. GALLEGHER

* * The Editors have Mr. Gallegher's interesting suggestion under advisement, and will revert to it later on. Meanwhile, they'll be glad to hear the views of other readers.

COME ON, WILL!

WHAT your magazine needs is more humor. I like it pretty well, and buy it whenever I have the two bits to spare, but you give me too much serious stuff, by college professors, publicists, and so on. In such hard times as these I like to laugh, and when I say laugh I don't mean smile.

I wish you had the enterprise to hire Will Rogers. He is the best humorist in the country today. If you had an article by him every month your magazine would be much better than it is.

Amarillo, Tex.

D. D. GRADY

IT MAY BE DONE ANON

DURING its early years THE AMERICAN MERCURY used to print an annual note upon its contributors, showing where they were born and where they lived. This was very interesting to me, and I am sorry that the notes were abandoned. Now that the magazine is about to enter upon its tenth year, wouldn't it be a good idea to resume them?

Los Angeles

GEORGE S. BROUGH

A CALL FOR SECESSION

THAT relict of a dead England, Alexander Hamilton, called the Constitution a "frail and worthless fabric." He was something of a Metternich, a little of a Duke of Wellington. He had the insight of a card-sharper, and was destitute of that humanistic genius which wrote "The Wealth of Nations," and the Declaration of Independence. He was essentially an intrigant and adventurer. One of the vast historic ironies is that he was permitted by the Divine Ruler of the Universe to fellow with the ageing Washington, and before that to take part in the formation of the Constitution.

He belonged to the England of the Stuarts. He had ochlophobia in its worst form; and when he couldn't put clauses in the Constitution to give the rich and the so-called high-toned the control of the government, he sighed for a catastrophe, a war it might be, which would overthrow the Constitution and put Tories in the saddle. That is the kind of revolution which is not punished with the halter, but is rewarded by honors, offices, money and lasting fame—bestowed by such revolutionaries upon themselves and each other. The so-called Civil War was the very thing that Hamilton gropingly had in mind; and that was led by a Hamiltonian

disguised as a rail-splitter, and aided by Hamiltonians masquerading as Whigs, and then as Republicans. No matter for this now. We are again confronted by an election. Shall we vote for Mr. Hoover and his bureaucrats, and his empty palliatives? Shall we vote for Mr. Roosevelt and his kind of protective tariff? Or shall we not vote at all?

When Hamilton called the Constitution a "frail and worthless fabric" he meant that the people would have too much to say about the government; he also meant that the English system of land and other exploitation for the benefit of the strong and the virtuous could not well get hold of affairs here; and therefore that the really worth-while people would not be interested enough in the government—that is in the money sense—to take hold and rule. The protective tariff had been scotched by the constitutional clause providing for revenue only, not protection. But Hamilton set his Scottish wits to work. Why not put over a protective tariff, and then let the courts, if they could, find a judicial dichotomy which would put revenue on one side and protection on the other? This was awful slick; so much so that that great protector of the Constitution, that Pretorian guard of liberty and law, the Supreme Court, immediately passed the buck. I am using gambling language, because we are now ruled by gamblers, and they will understand me better. Hence the "frail and worthless fabric," *circa* 1789, began to be infested with the bacteria of protection of the smooth, the rough and the dusty variety.

Item two. The framers feared corporations and monopolies to the point of fanaticism. They voted down a resolution which would have empowered Congress to charter corporations and banks. Did that hinder Hamilton? No! He posited

that every sovereign nation had the power to charter corporations; second, that the United States was a sovereign nation; *ergo*, that Congress could charter a bank. Do you perceive in this syllogism what logicians call an undistributed middle? If you don't you will place yourself in the honored company of the Supreme Court, and nothing can be more honorable. The total result was that in Hamilton's day we had a United States Bank, and the protective tariff; we had a central money power greater than the States; and the beginning of an oligarchy of privilege.

And then John Marshall came along, and by cultivating Hamilton's doctrine of implied powers he began to gather in all the sovereign powers of the States so that they could be exercised by bureaus in Washington under the control of the executive. When Lee fought Grant to a finish in the Summer of 1864 that was what it was about. It was the last stand of the States against bureaucrats, Supreme Courts, and gamblers. New England and the North couldn't eat Virginia and the South without first destroying State sovereignty.

They duly destroyed it and ate the South. Then they got hungry and turned to the West. Now they have almost all the country eaten. All this economic fuddling on the part of Mr. Hoover is to give this insatiable appetite that has been stimulated and overfed something more to eat. If they don't get more there will be trouble; not revolution, which can be stopped by guns, but trouble which only the trouble makers themselves can stop, and won't stop till they are appeased.

Is there anything in either platform, is there anything in either candidate for President that savors of relief? There is nothing. Meliorism will only postpone the final reckoning. Mr. Hoover's remedies

are like Lydia Pinkham's Vegetable Compound: they seem to cure, but they only stimulate. There will never be any real prosperity in this country until we get down to bottom remedies. We will have gambler's prosperity—stocks may soar, and goods may be exchanged—but of real prosperity there will be none.

Let us divide the country into two Republics, and to that extent get back State sovereignty. If that is disfavored let us abolish the "frail and worthless fabric," adopt a ministerial form of government, send the members of the Supreme Court to their respective places of nativity, where they can sleep in the afternoon to their hearts' content; and have a government where its laws are like those of Parliament, above all courts and all powers; and where a government, a ministry, can be turned out at will, and at once. Will that solve the tariff question, the Prohibition question, and the economic question? At least we will be on the way. Now we are in the woods.

Winsted, Conn. EDGAR LEE MASTERS

"AN INDEX IS LACKING"

You are always calling, in The Check List, for indexes to books, and I am glad you are, for many American writers seem to be too lazy to make them, and the lack of them is a nuisance to readers. How many a time I have wasted a whole hour searching—usually in vain—for a passage vaguely remembered! What surprises me is that you have never complained about the lack of an index to the Bible. There are, of course, indexed Bibles, but they seem to be rare. I have been making a tour of the country of late, and taking a look at the Gideon Bibles in hotel rooms. So far I have not found a single one with an index. When I look into the Bible I like to re-read certain favorite passages,

but very often I can't find them. The other night, in Louisville, I spent two hours trying to find the one about taking "a little wine for thy stomach's sake", but I couldn't find it. A printer tells me that the Gideons could add indexes to their Bibles at a cost of no more than a cent and a half a copy. Why don't they do it?
Cincinnati A BAPTIZED MAN

THE ESKIMOS ALSO READ IT

A COUPLE of weeks ago I was on a ship that stopped at Massawa, a red-hot and God-forsaken town in the Italian colony of Eritrea, on the Red Sea coast of East Africa. The ship had to linger a while, and I went ashore to see what I could see. I found a hotel, and in it a sort of news-stand. I naturally looked for American papers and magazines. What was my surprise to find that the only American publications on hand were THE AMERICAN MERCURY and the *Saturday Evening Post*. The *Post*, though it was six weeks old, looked brand-new, but THE AMERICAN MERCURY showed every sign of having been read. . . . I waste a postcard on the news in the thought that it may puff you up.

GEORGE FRANCIS KEARNY
Alexandria, Egypt

ESTEEMED CONTRIBUTORS

I HAVE been going through the back files of THE AMERICAN MERCURY, and they set me to wondering what has become of some of your early contributors. There was a man named James M. Cain who used to write some fine stuff for you, but I haven't seen him on your table of contents for a long, long while. I note some others: Leland Jenks, Gregory Mason, Edward Sapir, George Philip Krapp, Lewis Galantière, Mary Alden Hopkins,

Paul Tanaquil and Emory Holloway. All of these were in your first two volumes. It would be pleasant to see them back.

Flint, Mich. MARY W. MARTIN

THE TEXAS LANGUAGE

I FIND the following in my note-book after a tour through Texas:

1. In Dallas I heard one policeman say to another: "He was hurt in the war. He *ain't* only got *but* one leg."

2. The high-toned colored folk of Houston have begun to differentiate between Afro-American and Afra-American. The former is used to designate males, and the latter females.

3. The collective pronoun *you-all*, which Southerners always claim as their invention, is in the King James Bible: I Thessalonians I, 3.

4. The spelling of *bozart*, for *beaux arts*, has been adopted by the Southern intellectuals. In Fort Worth a local poet showed me a copy of an advanced magazine, called *Bozart*, published at Atlanta.

5. All the drug-stores down here have stopped selling toilet articles. They now sell *toilettries*.

Austin, Tex.

S. A. H.

QUERIES¹

5. AN HISTORIC REMARK.—Can any of your readers give me the exact text and date of Mr. Hoover's saying about two cars in every garage and a chicken in every pot? I see constant references to it in the opposition newspapers, but I have been unable to find it in any of his published collections of speeches.

Butte, Mont. DEWOLFE STAYTON

6. COLLEGE YELLS.—Can you, or any of your readers, tell me where I can find a history of American college yells? My impression is that they did not come in until the middle 80's, but I don't know, and should like to find out. Some time ago, in a news-reel, I saw and heard a group of English college boys giving yells. This was

¹For the convenience of friends desiring to send in replies queries will be numbered hereafter.

the first news I had had that the institution had spread to England. Is there any printed collection of American yells? I should think it would be very interesting to philologists, not to say psychiatrists.
Berkeley, Calif. G. K. L.

7. A FINE AMERICAN WORD.—The other day a pupil asked me the origin of the word *blotto*, and I was stumped. Another pupil, a bright girl, suggested that it might be derived from *Blatta orientalis*, the Latin name of the cockroach, but that seemed far-fetched. I have been unable to find the word in any dictionary. I assume, of course, that the editorial staff of THE AMERICAN MERCURY knows, at least by hearsay, what it means. But where did it come from?
Atlanta, Ga. A TEACHER OF ENGLISH

8. WHITMAN & THE PROFESSORS.—I have several times seen the statement that Walt Whitman was tabooed by all the college professors of English literature until 1900 or thereabout. They regarded him, it appears, as an immoral author, and refused to mention him to their boys. An elderly friend who attended Yale from 1885 to 1889 tells me that he can't recall ever hearing Whitman's name mentioned. Are the facts available in any of the books on the poet? If so, I'd like to know what they are.
Seattle J. D. RETALLIATA

9. TWO QUERIES FROM ARKANSAS.—1. What is the modern American Catholic interpretation of the meaning of the Pope's title, Ruler of The World? 2. What is your best recipe for committing suicide by poisoning?
Little Rock, Ark. J. G. H.

10. INFANTILE PARALYSIS.—Anyone knowing of any references to poliomyelitis (infantile paralysis) in literature or history will confer a favor by sending them to the undersigned at 11 East Chase street, Baltimore. References in the medical literature prior to 1840 will also be welcome.
Baltimore JOHN RUHRÄH, M.D.

11. GOVERNMENT HELP.—How much wealth (in money and in property) has the

Federal government given away to private interests, to aid them in their infancy or to tide them over times of crisis, since the founding of the Republic? Has anybody ever computed the amount, and if so, where can I find it? Which leads me to a corollary question: What fraction of the national bureaucracy, and what part of the annual national outlay, have for their only purpose the helping of private business? In our early history the railroads, to mention one example, had a swell time with the government land which was given to them free; and in contemporary times the manufacturers of glue, corsets, fountain pens, automobiles, etc. are saving themselves millions of dollars with the information supplied them by the domestic and foreign bureaux of the Department of Commerce. In both cases, all I want to know is how much. I am not asking for theories. I want the facts. I'll do the philosophizing myself.
Topeka, Kan. F. LEROY EATON

REPLIES

3. THE INVENTOR OF FLY PAPER.—I assume that your correspondent, Mr. Burns of New Orleans, is spoofing when he suggests that Spinoza invented fly paper. Perhaps it will interest him to know that it must have been unknown in England so lately as 1901, for the F-G volume of the NED does not list its name. But I seem to remember it in America long before 1901. However, it was certainly unknown at the time of the Civil War. This narrows the field of inquiry, but leaves Mr. Burns unanswered.
Portland, Me. ARTHUR J. SAUNDERS

4. FIDDLER'S BITCH.—The simile, *as drunk as a fiddler's bitch*, is very old in English. The word *bitch*, of course, does not allude to the fiddler's dog, but to his lady. Roving fiddlers were known in England so long ago as the Twelfth Century. They were then classed with rogues and vagabonds, and the women who accompanied them about the country were naturally somewhat loose, and often given to drink.
New York CHARLES GOLDSTEIN

COMMENTARY

BY H. L. MENCKEN

The Rush for the Trough

Optimism, the ancient faith and folly of the American people, has got some dreadful wallops from the Depression, but there is still enough of it left to go round. It takes, of late, the form of a touching confidence that the taxpayer, in the long run, will profit by the present discontents—that the costs of government will be somehow abated and the tax burden reduced. This is precisely as sensible as believing that next week will have seven Tuesdays—no less and no more. The plain fact is that government is costing us more every day, Depression or no Depression. If a million is lopped off here, two millions are added there. Nine times out of ten, in truth, the million is lopped off only in theory. A month or two later one usually hears that the jobholders who were to have been dispensed with cannot be spared, and even that more are needed. There is not the slightest sign that any American statesman above the level of a village selectman is actually trying to cut down the overturn of his business. The most that any of them proposes to do is to save a dollar where it is doing him no good, and spend it royally, along with another dollar to keep it company, where it will get him votes.

It is easy to blame the politicians for this thimble-rigging, but as a matter of fact it is an essential rite of their art and mystery. No officeholder in American history ever got anywhere by saving the public money: all of the salient heroes were fellows who discovered new ways to waste it. For the American people, since the first days of

the Republic, have always thought of the public treasury as a bank that could somehow pay out more than it took in, and nine-tenths of them, at one time or another, have made more or less violent efforts to raid it. Even today, with national bankruptcy nearer than ever before, the demand for economy is much less insistent than the demand for doles. Every American seems to be convinced that he will somehow get the better of the scramble—that he will be able to make off with more than he is forced to put in. The universal dispersion of that delusion is one of the things that is mainly the matter with us.

The first raiders, in the days following the Revolution, were the discharged soldiers, and their successors and assigns will probably be the last as well, for patriotism in America has always been regarded, not as a form of sacrifice, but as a kind of trade, with its union rules and its minimum wages. The concept of unselfish public service, whether in peace or in war, seems to be wholly incomprehensible to the national mind. After every one of our wars the returned heroes have demanded payment in cash for their heroism, and always they have got it. What is going on now, with the grand goblins of the American Legion doing the whooping, is simply a repetition of what went on after the Revolution and the Civil War. That the boys will get their money soon or late is certain, and that they deserve to have it I am surely not one to deny. For when they went into the war they knew very well, as everyone else knew, what the common

American idea was in that matter, and I see no reason today for refusing to give them what, by the rules of the game, they earned. The time to change the doctrine that a hero ought to be paid off in cash is not after a war, but before. But when a war is in the making the politicians who are managing it never mention the subject.

Next to the war veterans the chief American mendicants, as everyone knows, are the farmers. They have been hanging at the public teat since the days of Thomas Jefferson, and they will never get enough. No one has ever heard of a farmer, in ancient or modern times, who gave a thought to anything save his own private interest. Politics, to him, is a game of grab, and it is nothing more. He flocks after any new politician who promises to get him another whack at the Treasury. He believes fully, as a cardinal article of faith, that it ought to compensate him for every loss he incurs in his business. When prices are high he lays them on the city man with Christian ferocity, but when they are low he bawls piteously for compensation out of the taxes that city men mainly pay. In every American State the farmers spend far more time planning and executing such raids than they ever give to their professional labors. When the city man resists, they pay him up by saddling Prohibition upon him, or some other such affliction. And when he succumbs they reward him in the same coin.

The farmers were at it early, and have been at it ever since, but during the first half of the last century they were joined by the manufacturers, then struggling to get a start, and by various lesser bands of prehensile men. The protective tariff, stripped of all its fancy labels, is simply a scheme to take away the money of A, B, C, D and company, who have earned it by hard toil, and hand it over to X, who

is too incompetent to get it by fair trading. There is no evidence that the Fathers of the Republic contemplated setting up this dole, but they were somewhat careless men, and so made the Constitution beautifully vague. Thus the way was open for the courts, which have always been hospitable to raids on the Treasury, and at an early date they found plenty of reasons, idiotic to fair men but acceptable to the legal mind, for permitting the aforesaid robbery. We have had protective tariffs ever since, and the one that we have now is worse than any that went before. Moreover, it has forced all other nations to go the same route, and the result is that international trade becomes so difficult that it is almost impossible, and we linger in a Depression which ruins even the old beneficiaries of protection.

Once the manufacturers of the country had discovered a way to pillage their fellow Americans by law, many other bands of enterprising men followed suit, and now we have reached such a stage that every second American is either at the public teat or struggling to get there. The waste of public money is so stupendous as to almost pass belief, and there is no sign whatever that it will diminish in the near future. Every taxpayer groans under the burden, but there is no general demand, resolute and well directed, that taxes be decreased. Instead, there is simply an almost unanimous scramble to get some of the loot. Every fellow believes that he can chisel more out of the Treasury than he is forced to put in. In some cases this may be true, but it can't be true in all, or even in a majority. The rush for the trough is simply converting multitudes of Americans into incurable mendicants, and dissipating the savings of those who are willing to work, and want to pay a reasonable price for what they get.

How far this business has gone is well set forth in two recent books by legal scholars: "Congress As Santa Claus," by Charles Warren, and "The Federal Octopus," by Sterling E. Edmunds.¹ Mr. Edmunds confines himself to the malignant proliferation of the Federal bureaucracy, but Mr. Warren goes into more fundamental causes. What has got us sliding downhill toward bankruptcy is a vast extension, partly by Congress and partly by the complaisant courts, of the "general welfare" clause of the Constitution. That clause was put in by the Fathers to take care of great national emergencies, but as usual they were careless, and their text has been distorted to permit almost any imaginable raid upon the Treasury. Today the thing rises to really fantastic heights. Thousands of lazy dogs who never heard a shot fired in anger are supported in luxury in Federal hospitals, disguised as war veterans. Grotesque bands of old maid busybodies, each with a salary and an expense-account, go about the country telling women how to have children. The Department of Agriculture spends millions to teach the refinements of botany to farmers who are too stupid to learn how to pick potato-bugs. And not long ago—believe it or not!—the Department of Commerce was issuing an elaborate monograph instructing druggists in the art of furnishing and decorating their stores! Says Mr. Warren:

Even if we grant the existence of a power in Congress to appropriate money for any purpose whatever which it deems to be for the *general* welfare, the question still remains: Where does it get the power to do-

¹ CONGRESS AS SANTA CLAUS, *or, National Donations & the General Welfare Clause of the Constitution*, by Charles Warren. \$2. 7¼ x 5½; 151 pp. Charlottesville, Va.: *The Michie Company*. THE FEDERAL OCTOPUS, by Sterling E. Edmunds. \$1. 9¼ x 6½; paper; 122 pp. Charlottesville, Va.: *The Michie Company*.

nate the national funds *for the benefit of particular individuals* in Cuba, or in Salem, Mass., or in North Dakota, who may have been unlucky enough to lose their property, their houses, or their crops?

Mr. Warren does not answer his own question. He searches for the answer, but he never finds it. The current system of universal grab has had a long history: it goes back to the early days of the Republic. And it will take more than a Depression to break it up. It has got some blows, to be sure, but only in the States, not at Washington. Many of the States are bankrupt, along with most of the big American cities: it is that reason, and that reason only, which has shut off the flow of easy money. If they should recover tomorrow their politicians would resume dissipating their funds, for that is how politicians live and have their being—that is how they get votes. I hope no reader of these lines will take seriously the bellows for economy that occasionally issue from the politicians at Washington, of both parties alike. All that is only hooey. Those politicians will keep on pouring out the taxpayers' money so long as the Federal government has any credit left. What they can't raise by direct taxation they will raise by loans. And there will be no trouble about loans so long as government bonds are selling in the market at better than 4%.



Animadversions on the Campaign

Mr. Hoover's ungraceful and unconvincing flop on Prohibition offers a pretty good measure of him. The statesman vanishes into thin air, and there remains only a scared office-seeker, struggling to get in out of a hail-storm. In gloomy moments I often suspect that there is not much more

to the right hon. gentleman than that. His principles, such as they are, seem to be ready at any moment to yield to his interest. When his interest is not clear, as sometimes happens, he wobbles painfully, and his wobbling is always done in the full light of day, with a ribald gallery looking on. It was thus that he resolved, some years back, the great question whether he was a Democrat or a Republican. Who can say what his decision would have been if the Democrats had been a shade more hospitable to his aspirations? Who, indeed, can say where Martin Luther would have landed if the Pope, on October 30, 1517, had sent him a cardinal's hat?

I can recall but one occasion when His Excellency performed any such heart-searching in camera, and that was shortly before his inauguration, when he entered his praying chamber to find out if he was really a Quaker, as the family Bible said. He came out in a palpable sweat, and showing every sign of having had a hard wrestle. It may be indelicate to say so, but I suspect that the Inner Light really deceived him. He is, deep down in his soul, not a Quaker at all, nor anything even remotely resembling one, but simply a small-town Methodist of the commonest sort; and he can no more get rid of the fact than old Charlie Curtis can get rid of the embarrassing fact that the best Injun is a dead one. Hoover was happiest and felt safest, I believe, when Methodist bishops were in regular attendance at his table, gorging on his fried chicken and sliced tomatoes, and likening him politely to the Holy Spirit. He must miss them now that they have run out on him.

But despite their withdrawal I doubt that they really hold any considerable grudge against him, for they are all politicians before they are ecclesiastics, and in that character they know very well that his flop was

inescapable. He found himself on a hot spot, and had to get off as best he could. Worse, he was surprised as well as scorched, for his confidential agents had misled him. They believed honestly and told him sincerely, at least until the week before the Chicago convention, that it would be possible to swathe the Prohibition question in patriotic rhetoric and thus get rid of it, as it was got rid of in 1928. But when the first delegations began to roll in it was seen that this was not so. Those delegations were made up of men and women of the highest conceivable orthodoxy: they were collectors of customs, Federal marshals, postmasters, receivers in bankruptcy, and the wives thereof. Their hearts swelled with loyalty to the Presence. Nevertheless, they had heard enough back home to convince them that it was all up with Prohibition, and when they imparted this conviction to the Hoover agents there was some tall telephoning to Washington. The result was the flop aforesaid.

It left the poor Prohibitionists in a dreadful state of mind. In all their days of glory they had never done more for any candidate than they did for the Hon. Mr. Hoover in 1928, and yet here he was deserting them in the very face of the enemy! Some of them, in high dudgeon, began to talk of going over to the Democrats, but that was only talk, for a moment's reflection warned them against any such leap from the frying-pan into the fire. Not a few, knowing their man, have since staggered back to Hoover, and he has welcomed them effusively, but the larger number continue to roam the Bad Lands, full of dark fears that Yahweh Himself may be only another Hoover. There is not much fight left in them. They are torn between a Christian impulse to fall upon their late friend and beneficiary, and rend him limb from limb, and the uneasy re-

flection that every time they crack him they will help Roosevelt, who is even worse. So they confine themselves in the main to badgering candidates for Congress in the Hookworm Belt, where the ghost of Prohibition remains sufficiently fearsome to scare the meaner sort of office-seekers. In the cities they are heard from no more. Prohibition is dead there, and I am inclined to think that it will remain dead.

I assume, in fact, that no civilized American is dry any more, and here address myself to the wets exclusively, and especially those who have been wet since the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, hoping against hope, and riposting damn for damnation. What are they to do in the premises? How are they to vote on November 8? I see but one course for them, and that is to vote for the Hon. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, LL.D. In him, alas, there are many imperfections, some congenital and some acquired. He shares the common Roosevelt quality of being somewhat theatrical: he is only too often the actor far more than he is a statesman. His mind, secondly, performs its operations in a sort of pink and perfumed fog, and what he has to say has usually been said before, and far better said. He is, thirdly, loaded with enlightened self-interest to the nozzle, and may be trusted, even in the gravest emergency, to remember assiduously that there is such a fellow in the world as Franklin Delano Roosevelt. And fourthly, he is in intimate communion with a number of extremely suspicious characters, including that most dismal old plug, the Hon. John Nance Garner of Texas.

This list of demerits and deficiencies might be lengthened considerably, but however much it were lengthened it would still fall far short of the list of the Hon. Mr. Hoover. Hoover, too, is an actor, but with this difference from Dr. Roosevelt, that he

is one of the worst ever heard of in the world. No clown in Hollywood could be less plausible than he is. He is forever leaping upon the stage in the shining armor of Galahad, and then shuffling off in the motley of Scaramouche. Even when he has heroic lines, an adept supporting company, and the gallery with him—as, for example, in the case of his late onslaught on the bonus marchers—he always manages to make a mess of his performance. No more preposterous ham, in fact, has ever occupied his place, and if he is remembered for nothing else it will be for his unparalleled professional incompetence. Try to imagine him handling the Jimmy Walker buffoonery as adroitly as Roosevelt handled it! Who can doubt that, if Washington had been its scene, Jimmy would have come out on top? And who can doubt that he would have earned his triumph? But when the crude japes of the penthouses and the speak-easies collided with the polished histrionism of a Roosevelt, there could be naught on the cards for poor James save ignominious disaster.

So down the line. If Roosevelt, when he grapples with the solemn problems of statecraft, turns out, only too often, to have nothing worth hearing to say about them, then it must be noted in fairness that he has quite as much to say as Hoover, and that he says it, such as it is, in much better English. And if, when he ponders such matters, he does not let himself forget his own fortunes for an instant, then surely it would be absurd to say that his mind dwells on such matters any more than Hoover's. And if, finally, he pollutes his society with such mephitic shapes as Dr. Garner, then he still breathes a sanitary atmosphere compared to Hoover. Certainly old Charlie the Injun is enough to cancel out Garner, or, indeed, a whole herd of Garners. But Charlie is only one,

and not the worst. Hoover's taste in politicians seems to run to those who are almost intolerably gamey, and even pto-maniacal. He was nominated and elected in 1928 mainly by professional blacklegs of the worst sort, and the methods they employed on his behalf, obviously with his full knowledge and apparently with his eager consent, made his campaign one of the most disgraceful in American history. He has rid himself of some of these persons since, but their successors are not much better. If you want to find out what kind of company he keeps, examine the lists of his callers at the White House and his guests on the Rapidan. Surely no other American President, not even Coolidge or Harding, has ever gone in for more appalling society.

Here we come to one of the really fundamental differences between Hoover and Roosevelt. Roosevelt, whatever his faults otherwise, at least makes it clear by his every word and act that he has behind him the training of what is called a gentleman. A good half of his sometimes too facile amiability is to be so explained. He is a naturally kindly man, but he is also one who has been schooled in the amenities all his life. Even his butchery of poor Walker, cruel though it was, was carried off in a courteous manner, and all the moral indignation was on Walker's side. Hoover is simply not that sort of fellow. For all his high collars and fawning secretaries, his far travels and learned degrees, he remains an Iowa rustic, and in him the immemorial traits of the rustic shine unpleasantly: suspiciousness, stubbornness, timorousness, fear of ideas, lack of grace. It takes months to convert him to a proposal that Roosevelt would grasp instantly: in the matter of the moratorium he hung back so long that when he yielded at last it was almost too late. He apparently dis-

trusts and avoids men of any intellectual enterprise and resilience, and is on friendly terms with very few of them. He has been a sore trial to the brighter members of his Cabinet, and they seem to be never sure of him.

Nor is he ever quite sure of himself: the serene self-confidence of a really civilized man is simply not in him. Even when things are running his way he usually manages to tip-toe and stumble into trouble. The case of the bonus marchers recalls itself again. He ran in great luck in the early stages of that sad comedy. The country, having tired of the marchers, was glad to see them kicked out, and the star-spangled General Douglas MacArthur managed the business in a satisfyingly brutal and antiseptic manner. The newspapers, with few exceptions, gave hearty cheers. But in the midst of their Christian rejoicing Hoover had to defame the poor idiots he had gassed, and presently there was a sharp reaction, and the American Legion was on the loose. In brief, the calm and implacable statesman, bent only upon preserving public order, revealed himself overnight as a peevish and unfair partisan, fevered by transparently discreditable fears. The bonus marchers had been made by God for a really clever politician. They had no votes, they were without competent leaders, and they had worn out their welcome as comedians. But Hoover, succumbing to his congenital boorishness, spoiled it all by tackling them in the manner of an Iowa Methodist turning out with dung-fork and ax-handle to scotch an atheist.

I can imagine nothing more lamentable than the folly of a wet who votes for him this month, hoping and believing that he will make an honest effort to get rid of Prohibition. All the probabilities plainly run the other way. He has been cheek by

jowl with Anti-Saloon League politicians too long, and has disclosed too vast a natural fondness for their ways, to be really getting loose from them now. Forced by an unpleasant necessity, he may appear to turn his back upon them, but all the while his heart remains with them, and he will prove it at the first chance. The smell of such consecrated men does not disgust him; he loves it as any other peasant loves it. No sooner did he make his historic flop than he began to hedge, and he has been moving back toward Zion ever since, inch by inch, grunt by grunt. Have you heard of him sending any love-letters to wets, or getting any from them? But all the more realistic and politic dries have been trying to make up with him, and he has been meeting them more than half way. They are shrewd fellows, and know what they are about.

I see no reason why any conscientious wet should trust so palpable a rice convert. Roosevelt, perhaps, is a convert too, but at least he has been on the hallelujah bench for four years, and not for a scant three months. Nor has he done any appreciable edging toward the other side of the house. He may not be as wet as the late Al Smith, but he is certainly a million times as wet as Hoover. No one has ever heard of any dry evangelists sending him mash-notes, and assuring him that they trust him. No Methodist bishop has praised him as a noble patriot and a Christian statesman. He has never won an election with the help of the Anti-Saloon League, the Ku Klux Klan, or the Methodist Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals. He never went to Sunday-school in Iowa. And he is not burdened with a

running-mate who remains an open, avowed and undisguised Prohibitionist. If I remember to vote at all, I shall vote for Roosevelt.

The notion that Prohibition is not the salient issue in the campaign, nor even a really important issue, and that in consequence it should be subordinated to this or that so-called economic issue, is pure nonsense. That nonsense issues mainly from Republican party hacks, who would naturally like to get rid of a question which threatens to lose them the election and ruin their candidate. Some of the lesser Democrats, especially in the remoter reaches of the Bible country, have the same yearning, but they are not as numerous as the Republicans, all of whom have been greatly embarrassed by Dr. Hoover's laborious efforts to play both sides against the middle. The truth is, of course, that Prohibition is immensely more important than any imaginable economic issue. No sensible man believes that either Hoover or Roosevelt can do anything substantial to end the Depression: it must run its course, and soon or late it will end. But every sensible man rejoices at the present chance to strike a blow for the ancient liberties of the American people.

Prohibition is a deliberate conspiracy against those liberties, and we have suffered from it long enough. It is intolerably vicious, knavish, depraved and obscene. Nothing whatever can be said in favor of it. Now is the time to give it its death-blow, and to drive out of public life, once and for all time, the disgusting mountebanks who, until the fires of public indignation got too hot, kept themselves in office by supporting it.

THE AMERICAN MERCURY AUTHORS

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H. E. BUCHHOLZ is publisher and managing editor of Educational Administration and Supervision, established by him in 1915, and publisher of the Journal of Educational Psychology, founded by him in 1910. His most recent book is "Fads and Fallacies in Present-Day Education."

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as much his as Sumner's, and between the two men there was always a close personal and professional relationship. Dr. Keller has recently published, under the title of "Man's Rough Road," a short summary of "The Science of Society." He has also recently completed a volume of personal recollections of Sumner.

HOFFMAN NICKERSON is now at work on a book to be called "The United States and the New Europe."

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